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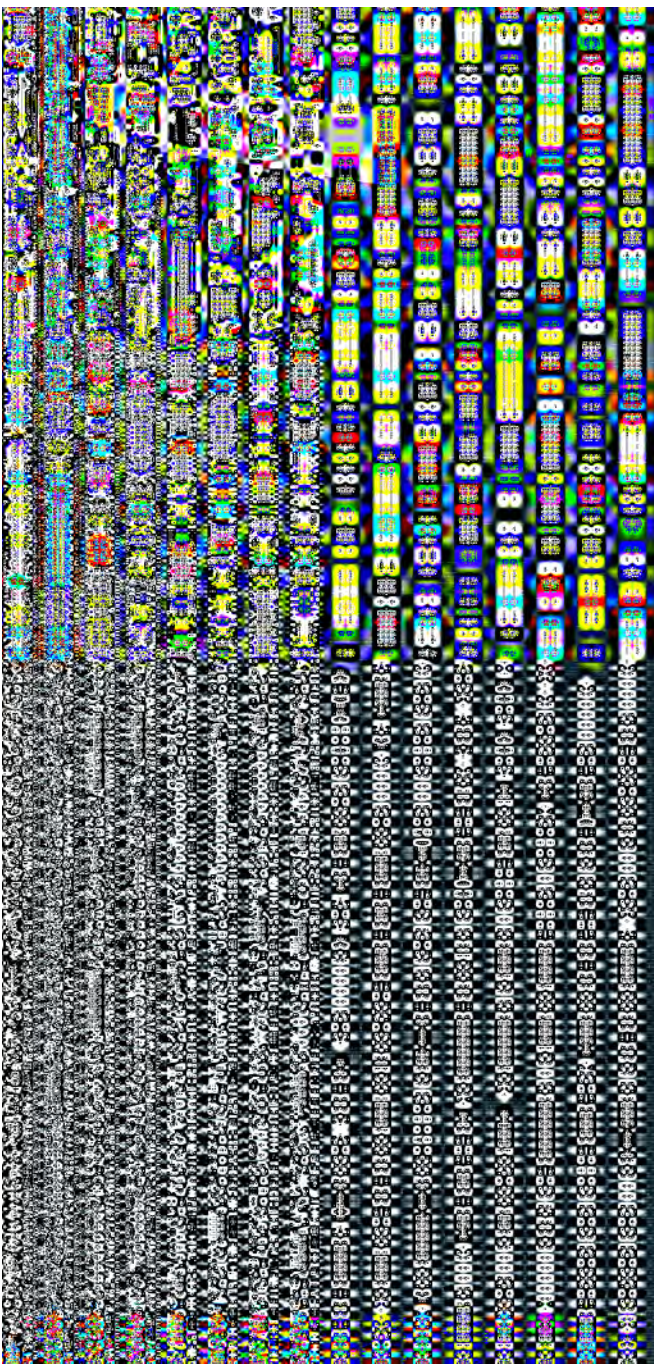
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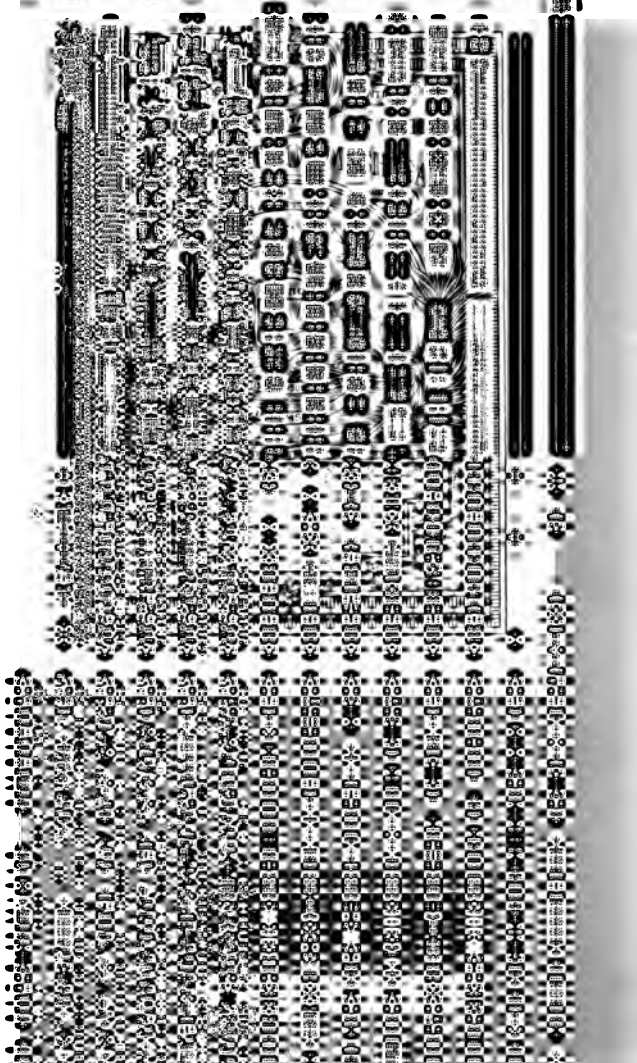
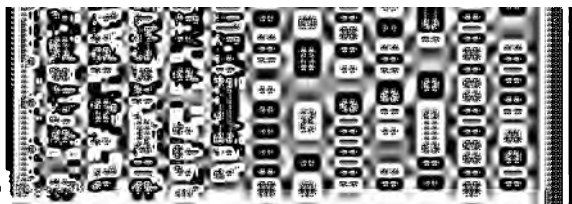
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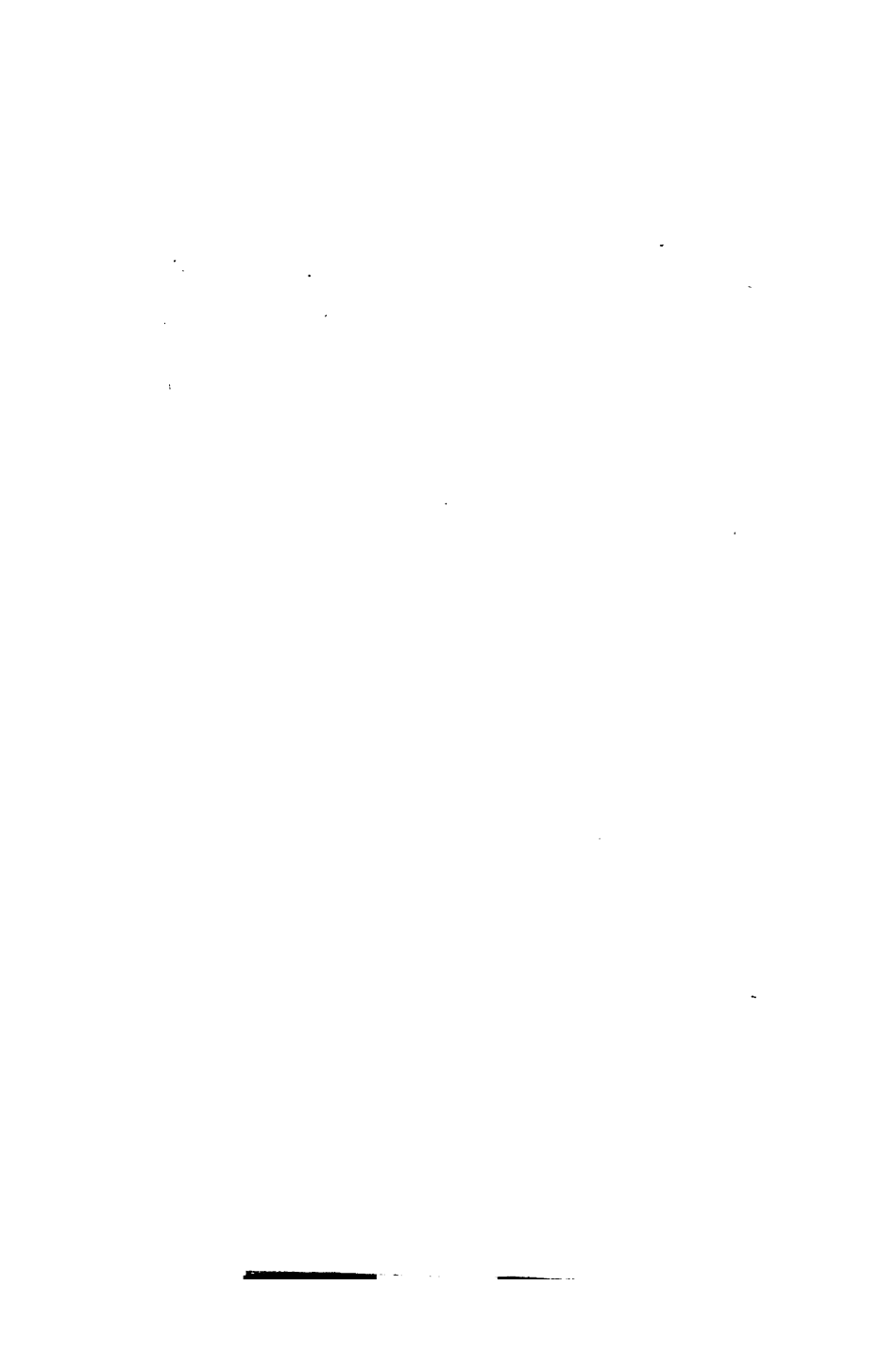
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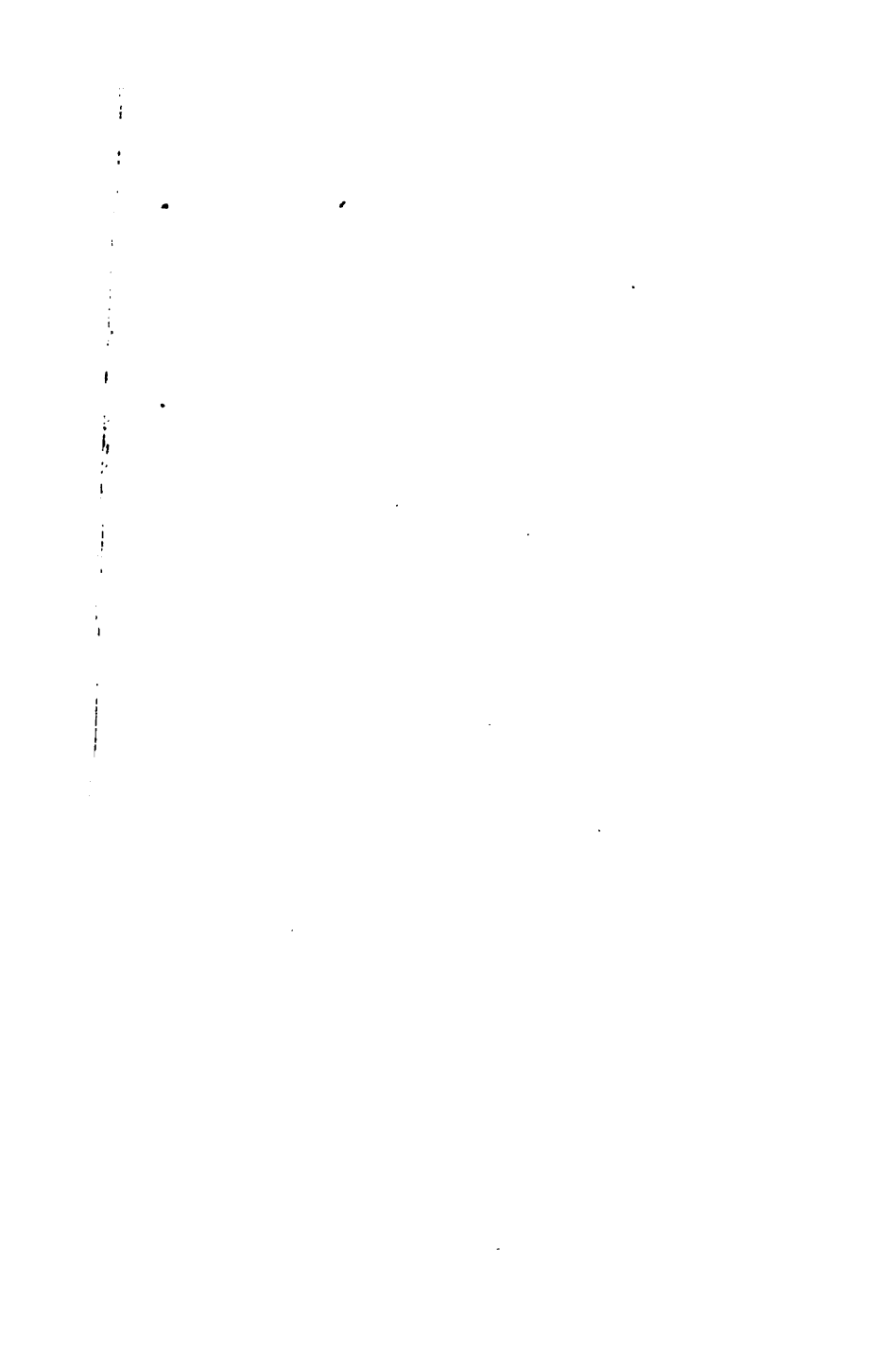














LAY SERMONS.





*Coleridge, Samuel Taylor*  
**LAY SERMONS.**

**I. THE STATESMAN'S MANUAL**

**II. BLESSED ARE YE THAT SOW BESIDE ALL  
WATERS.**

**EDITED, WITH THE AUTHOR'S LAST CORRECTIONS AND NOTES,**

**BY DERWENT COLERIDGE, M.A.**

**THIRD EDITION**

**LONDON:  
EDWARD MOXON, DOVER STREET.  
1852.**

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## PREFACE.

BY THE EDITOR.

9 THE Lay Sermons of S. T. Coleridge, brought  
11-18-47 out originally as pamphlets, in the years 1816 and  
1817,\* then appended to the third edition of the  
Church and State, are now for the first time  
presented to the public in a separate volume.  
Hitherto they have perhaps excited less attention,  
in proportion to their worth and importance, than  
any other of the author's productions. It was  
not to be expected that they should become  
immediately popular. They do not bear an  
attractive title. Neither the union of religion  
with politics, nor of philosophy with religion, meets  
with general favour in this country. Each of these  
subjects is studied apart, by a different class of

\* "The Statesman's Manual," a Lay Sermon, 8vo. Gale and Fenner, 1816. "Blessed are ye that sow beside all Waters," a Lay Sermon. Gale and Fenner, 8vo., 1817.



persons, very commonly in a spirit of mutual jealousy. It is the object of the Lay Sermons to exhibit them as necessarily interdependent. With somewhat of an occasional character, with an express reference to a particular conjuncture of affairs, not without an appearance, though an appearance only, of political bias, and with considerable warmth of language, they conciliated no prepossessions, and were calculated to serve no party purpose. Above all, they were found to require a fixity of attention in the perusal, and an amount of patient afterthought, which it would be unreasonable to expect from the many, and which is not easy to obtain, for any deeper process of self-knowledge, even from a few.

Yet it cannot be doubted that these Sermons have found readers, more or less thoughtful, and have contributed with the rest of the author's writings, to leaven the public mind. Opinions, here combated, it might almost seem with the energy of despair,—ways of thinking then all but universal, are now no longer prevalent;—at least they no longer rise to the surface. Indeed there have been witnessed more than indications of an opposite extreme,—a result which has been expressly attributed, both by friendly and unfriendly observers,

to the writings and conversation of Coleridge. There may be *some* truth in the allegation. Principles, the guides and supports of thought, when removed from the ground out of which they spring, can hardly fail to lead to excess. They become of limited application, and can no longer be regarded as organs of absolute truth. The founders, are not the leaders of opinion. For one of the former, there are many of the latter, who may be mutually opposed, yet refer to a common authority. Or, if it be more convenient, they may deny their origin, and impute it as a reproach to their opponents. It has so fared with Coleridge. He has been made responsible for contending errors, and for rival mischiefs, by those who owe to him, directly or remotely, whatever is true or striking in the school of thought which they profess. Or they would have it to be understood that he worked for his own age:—that his work is done, and his mission at an end. Of the Lay Sermons, more particularly, it may be imagined that they refer to the past, and that the lapse of five and thirty years has deprived them of whatever importance they once possessed.

To these and the like objections currently alleged against the writings of Coleridge (the influence of which, felt, it may confidently be asserted, in every

sect of opinion, has been, and is, from different quarters, and in a contrary sense, continually impugned), it is best to reply by an appeal to the works themselves.

The Lay Sermons, to which the attention of the reader is now invited, taken together, may be regarded as a contribution to religious philosophy, considered under three aspects, as politics or the doctrine of civil rights, and duties; as mental philosophy; and as theology, commonly so called. As above remarked, these are exhibited in mutual connexion; but of the two treatises the latter is more political, the former more expressly theological; while the Appendix to the first Sermon, not the least valuable portion of the whole, contains what is most peculiar to the author, in the region of pure thought.

The author's political views may possibly have created a prejudice against him with some of those who would be disposed to respect his judgment on other points. They are opposed, in appearance, to those formerly maintained by himself. Perhaps they may be thought to partake in certain economical fallacies which have subsequently been exposed. A closer inspection will, it is believed, leave a different impression. The form may belong in some

measure to the past ; the principles enunciated, and this with singular force and clearness, are permanent.

*Primâ facie*, the line taken may appear to be that of the old Tory. It is more imaginative, more religious—more a matter of principle, and less of expediency—than that of the modern Conservative. Addressing his countrymen shortly after the conclusion of the Peninsular War, at a period of great national depression, and general discontent, he is directly and vehemently opposed to the self-styled reformers, who were then ranged on the popular side and arrogated to themselves the exclusive attributes of liberality and patriotism. The arts of the demagogue were never more keenly analysed or more eloquently denounced. As specimens of splendid writing, these paragraphs cannot but be perused with interest, whatever may be thought of their political bearing ; but in truth they read a lesson of continual application in every free state. They point out and describe the ever-recurring canker of liberty. It is not much that could be added to what may be found on this head in Thucydides, Plato and Aristophanes ; but where shall we find the experienced warning of the profound, the subtle, and the witty Greek, so reproduced,—so translated for English ears.



Yet it is clearly in the interest of the people that all this is said. No where is the distinction between things and persons, and the consequent right of every individual to be dealt with for his own sake, and not as a mean to an end,—no where is this principle, upon which social freedom ultimately depends, more prominently brought forward. Hence, at a time when the battle of national education had still to be fought, he is found by the side of that venerable champion, who was then leading the van. It is not indeed to be supposed that the merits of Dr. Bell's system are here canvassed as a question of practical detail. The individual stands as the representative of a principle.

The cautions and distinctions laid down in connection with this subject may still be studied with advantage. We still need to be reminded that education "consists in educating the faculties, and forming the habits;" that a national education implies much more than the imparting of school knowledge to the people at large; that this is but one of many means to that end, and that the true education of the lowest class will be most effectually promoted by the better education of all classes, and especially of the highest.

The author's views on the subject of taxation will probably be disputed. In common with other theorists, he attributed the existing pressure rather to the transition from a state of war to peace, than to the actual amount of the public burthens. He is even of opinion that the sudden contraction of the public expenditure may itself create an inconvenience. As a general position he maintains that taxation, the proceeds of which are spent in the country itself, cannot affect the general wealth by its mere amount, and may even lead to promote it. He does not deny that taxes raised to meet a deficit occasioned by a past expenditure,—taxes raised to supply the place of money spent out of the country, or otherwise *unprofitably*, must be felt as so much actual loss;—as a payment, not as a loan. Perhaps the argument would have been clearer if this had been expressly stated. Still, if the principle be true, it was the actual deficit, the gap left in the public wealth by a costly war, not the taxation which it occasioned, which drained the resources of the land. Taxes, or no taxes, the money was gone. Taxation did not create the burthen. It only measured it.\*

\* For a fuller discussion of this subject see the third Essay in the 2nd vol. of the "Friend."

More interest will attach to the author's views respecting "the overbalance of the commercial spirit," as affecting the whole state of the body politic. To the spirit of commerce he is anything but unfriendly. To this he attributes "the largest portion of our actual freedom, and at least as large a share of our virtues as of our vices." It is the *overbalance* of which he complains, occasioned by the withdrawal of certain counterpoises which formerly held it in check ;—by the decayed feeling of hereditary rank, by the general neglect of all the austerer studies, and above all by the decline of religious faith. How warmly these opinions have since been maintained, and to what an extent they have coloured the literature of this country for the last quarter of a century, need not be pointed out. To judge how far they have been misrepresented, with what little justice this author is made accountable for the unreal character and dilettante dress which they have occasionally assumed, the reader must be referred to the original statements.

That large masses of the people may be oppressed and degraded by the uncontrolled action of purely commercial principles; that the monetary wealth of a country is no adequate measure of its well-being; that moral considerations must be taken

into the account ; and that no state can consist without the check and guidance of a deeper insight, and a higher law, than any which can be derived from calculations of profit and loss, are propositions which are now forcing themselves upon the attention of the most careless, selfish, and prejudiced. The reader will see in what light they were viewed, or, to speak more properly, by what light they were examined, by the author of the *Lay Sermons*. Perhaps it may prove a lode-star to pilot our thoughts, or help to pilot them, through a difficult and dangerous navigation. With a fervent attachment to the institutions of his country, and, in particular, to the National Church, he is much dissatisfied with their actual state. He would reform them ; not by bringing back the outward form of the past, necessarily imperfect and transient, but by developing the ultimate aim, and this in the true interest of humanity,—of man, as he is man. He is no blind adherent of power, privilege, or possession.

The leading idea of the whole is the transfusion of a religious element throughout the social fabric, with the Bible as a text-book of state-wisdom,—as the guide not only of private, but of public life. It is in connexion with this idea that the discussion



assumes a theological character. Indeed the political argument may be abstracted,—it may be set aside as obsolete or fallacious;—enough will remain for the religious inquirer, as such, to give these Sermons a permanent value.

With the tenor of Coleridge's religious system the reader may be supposed to be more familiar, whether by the perusal of his *Aids to Reflection*, and *Literary Remains*, or from the notice which it has received in the writings of others. The positions maintained in these pages have been variously illustrated by the author, in his different works, without for a moment abandoning the ground upon which they rest. First in importance is that which relates to the connexion between reason and faith,—perhaps the most vital question which, in the present state of religious opinion, among young men more especially, can be brought before the public mind.\* The author's views have been much misconceived on this point; it is difficult not to fear that they have been wilfully misrepresented. On the one hand he is made to cast away all divine guidance; to trust exclusively

\* See Preface to the 2nd vol. of Coleridge's "*Literary Remains*." (The theological portion of these volumes will shortly be reprinted, with the addition of much new matter, as a separate work.)

to the imperfect light of his own intelligence, and under this leading, to have set out on the way, with too many in his train, to utter uncertainty, and vacant night. On the other hand by those who dread, and resent his unceasing advocacy of *revealed* truth,—a gross caricature is put forth of his peculiar phraseology, utterly apart from his meaning,—as if in separating the provinces of Reason and Understanding, and confining the latter to its proper sphere, he found in contradictory statements an evidence of their truth, and based his conclusions upon the admitted fact of their absurdity.\* The subject cannot be studied by those

\* The relation between reason and understanding, as set forth by Kant, is thus popularly explained by the Baron Barchou de Penhoen, in his *Histoire de la Philosophie Allemande*, Paris, 1835.—“Au contact des objets extérieurs, nous recevons des impressions de plusieurs sortes, dont nous formons nos perceptions; de ces perceptions nous tirons d'autres perceptions plus générales encore: ce sont les conceptions; liant enfin les unes aux autres ces conceptions diverses, nous les rattachons toutes à une autre conception plus générale, *de telle sorte que cette dernière conception nous apparaitra comme un principe, les autres comme les conséquences de ce principe*. Le premier mode d'action de l'intelligence humaine, nous l'avons appelé SENSIBILITÉ; le second, ENTENDEMENT; le troisième, RAISON.

It does not belong to this place to examine in what respects the author of the *Lay Sermons* differed from, or how far he advanced beyond, the great philosopher whose terminology he adopted, and by whose method he was guided,

who are incapable of abstract thought, whether by natural incapacity, by want of opportunity, or by opposition of will. The intellectual perception of

with certain modifications, and to a certain extent. Whatever passed through Coleridge's mind underwent a certain vital change, even when it reappears under a very similar form, sometimes even when it is not claimed as his own. But the question is not here of his originality, which could not well be considered without bringing other labourers in the same field under review. Indeed the above definitions, taken from a clear, but slight analysis of Kant's elaborate work on the Pure Reason, are too general for the purpose of comparison. Yet they may suffice to evince to readers imperfectly acquainted with the subject, who may be under the influence of vague impressions derived from the current literature of the day, that the difference upon which Coleridge laid so much stress, which he detected under such various forms, and from which he drew such important consequences, had already been recognised, at least in its broader outlines, by a metaphysician of world-wide celebrity—a stern and inexorable thinker, least of all men likely to tolerate any unreal distinction. Kant called his great work a Preparation. It was Coleridge's aim to convert this into an Instrument of Reason to be employed in upholding the dearest interests of man. Strange that in thus mediating between faith and knowledge, he should have exposed his name to a double censure! Is it matter of reproach or suspicion that he brought home the fugitive and alienated servant of the sanctuary, not now a servant, but above a servant, affiliated by spiritual manumission? Is it matter of scorn, that pursuing truth, for truth's sake, with an entireness of heart and mind, which in this behoof may well be called singular, he attained to the desired intuition in the temple of Christianity, and with his face turned toward the fountal Light?

That a truth of reason may be inadequately represented

truth, on the part of the many, must ever be aided by the few,—must ever depend on formularies and symbols, more or less permanent;—may well be a light to the man himself, which he cannot communicate to others. But the number of those who sorely need, and are capable of receiving enlightenment within the sphere of conscious reflection, is far from inconsiderable: and the editor is but repeating the grateful experience of very many anxious students,—but anticipating what he believes will be the future experience of a large and increasing class of inquirers,—when he states his conviction that the aid afforded by Coleridge in the investigation of this subject, the assurance imparted of a necessary coinherence of reason and faith, in the proper sense of those terms, while the dicta of each, as separately received, are shown perpetually to converge and ultimately to coalesce, will be found as

in terms supplied by the understanding, and that an *apparent* contradiction may result, is but another way of affirming that the absolute and infinite cannot be measured by the relative and finite. This is not a matter of opinion; it is a determination of science. It will follow from this, that two contradictory statements may, in certain cases, suggest a higher truth, in which they are both reconciled. But this truth will bring with it its own proper evidence, and will be confirmed, not by the contradiction, but by the reconciliation.

an anchor of the soul in the drift and eddy of awakened thought.

It is in the way of arriving at this conclusion that the reader is led to take some steps in the domain of pure philosophy. On this head it will be sufficient to quote the words of the author himself. "These disquisitions," he observes, speaking of the Notes \* to the Statesman's Manual, "would form an appropriate conclusion to the Aids to Reflection. For as many as are wanting either in leisure, or inclination, or belief in their own competency to go further—from the miscellaneous to the systematic—that volume is a whole, and for them the whole work—while for others these notes form the drawbridge, the connecting link between the disciplinary and preparatory rules and exercises

\* These notes were originally printed with certain marks of emphasis, affected by the author in all his works, and which certainly help to bring out the meaning. The following sentence may be taken as a specimen. "The comprehension, impartiality, and far-sightedness of Reason (the LEGISLATIVE of our nature), taken singly and exclusively, becomes mere visionariness in *intellect*, and indolence or hard-heartedness in *morals*." The whole has since been reduced (whether judiciously or not may be questioned), to the plain uniformity preferred by the modern typographer; the reader must therefore be prepared for an occasional plenitude of significancy which will require him to pause upon the leading words.

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of reflection, and the system of faith and philosophy of S. T. C. 1827."

Of this system no complete and regular exposition was left by the author; but whosoever shall have really passed these approaches will probably be in a condition to construct the fabric for himself, (in so far as the free life awakened by Coleridge in every department of thought is capable of distinct embodiment,) from the materials which he will find prepared. And it may confidently be expected that his distinguished pupil, and literary executor,\* already known to the readers of Coleridge by his Introduction to the "Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit,"—"will not fail to communicate to the students of philosophy the results of labours which have occupied whatever leisure has been granted to him since the irreparable loss of his revered teacher." The editor has singular pleasure in having been made the medium of conveying this assurance to the public.

That the notes in question are addressed to the meditative reader, and are not intended for cursory perusal, is evident from the nature of the case; yet

\* Joseph Henry Green, Esq., F.R.S., Author of the Hunterian Orations, "Vital Dynamics" (1840); "Mental Dynamics" (1847), &c.

they might be read with pleasure for the sake of the language alone—the poetic form under which the author has revealed his deep meanings. The literary execution is indeed strangely beautiful,

Not harsh and crabbed,

as might be anticipated from the subject,

But musical as is Apollo's lute.

Like the dull and prickly cactus, the thorny plant of metaphysics bursts into a gorgeous flower.

The object of these observations will have been answered, if they have afforded a *conspectus*, however general, of the various matters discussed in the following pages. The solemn importance of the interests involved in the determination of such an inquiry, may well set aside all personal considerations. It is unnecessary that the editor should do more than allude to the relation in which he stands to the author whose work it has become his duty to edit. It would have been unfaithful to have withheld his convictions, and scarcely becoming to have altered the tone of his expressions on that account.

DERWENT COLERIDGE.

May, 1852.

THE  
**STATESMAN'S MANUAL;**

OR,  
THE BIBLE THE BEST GUIDE TO POLITICAL SKILL AND  
FORESIGHT:

A LAY SERMON,

ADDRESSED TO THE HIGHER CLASSES OF SOCIETY,  
WITH AN APPENDIX, CONTAINING COMMENTS AND ESSAYS CONNECTED  
WITH THE STUDY OF THE INSPIRED WRITINGS.



*Ad isthæc quæso vos, qualiacunque primo videantur  
aspectu, attendite, ut qui vobis-forsan insanire videar, saltem  
quibus insaniam rationibus cognoscatis.—GIORDANO BRUNO.*

## A LAY SERMON,

ETC.

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*For he established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel ; which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children : that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born ; who should arise and declare them to their children : that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God.*—PSALM lxxviii. 5, 6, 7.

IF our whole knowledge and information concerning the Bible had been confined to the one fact of its immediate derivation from God, we should still presume that it contained rules and assistances for all conditions of men under all circumstances ; and therefore for communities no less than for individuals. The contents of every work must correspond to the character and designs of the workmaster ; and the inference in the present case is too obvious to be overlooked, too plain to be resisted. It

requires, indeed, all the might of superstition to conceal from a man of common understanding the further truth, that the interment of such a treasure in a dead language must needs be contrary to the intentions of the gracious Donor. Apostasy itself dared not question the premisses: and that the practical consequence did not follow, is conceivable only under a complete system of delusion, which from the cradle to the death-bed ceases not to over-awe the will by obscure fears, while it pre-occupies the senses by vivid imagery and ritual pantomime. But to such a scheme all forms of sophistry are native. The very excellence of the Giver has been made a reason for withholding the gift; nay the transcendant value of the gift itself assigned as the motive of its detention. We may be shocked at the presumption, but need not be surprised at the fact, that a jealous priesthood should have ventured to represent the applicability of the Bible to all the wants and occasions of men as a wax-like pliancy to all their fancies and prepossessions. Faithful guardians of Holy Writ, they are constrained to make it useless in order to guard it from profanation; and those, whom they have most defrauded, are the readiest to justify the fraud. For imposture, organised into a comprehensive and self-consistent whole, forms a world of its own, in which inversion becomes the order of nature.

Let it not be forgotten, however, (and I recommend the fact to the especial attention of those among ourselves, who are disposed to rest contented with an implicit faith and passive acquiescence) that the Church of Rome never ceased to avow the profoundest reverence for the Scriptures themselves, and what it forbids its vassals to ascertain, it not only permits, but commands them to take for granted.

Whether, and to what extent, this suspension of the rational functions, this spiritual slumber, will be imputed as a sin to the souls who are still under chains of Papal darkness, we are neither enabled nor authorised to determine. It is enough for us to know that the land, in which we abide, has like another Goshen *been severed from the plague*, and that we have light in our dwellings. The road of salvation for us is a high road, and the wayfarers, though *simple, need not err therein*. The Gospel lies open in the market-place and on every window seat, so that (virtually at least) *the deaf may hear the words of the book*. It is preached at every turning, so that the *blind may see* them. (*Isai. xxix. 18*). The circumstances then being so different, if the result should prove similar, we may be quite certain that we shall not be holden guiltless. The ignorance which may be the excuse of others will be our crime. Our birth and denizen-

ship in an enlightened and Protestant land will, with all our rights and franchises to boot, be brought in judgment against us, and stand first in the fearful list of blessings abused. The glories of our country will form the blazonry of our own impeachment, and the very name of Englishmen, of which we are almost all of us too proud, and for which scarcely any of us are enough thankful, will be annexed to that of Christians only to light up our shame and to aggravate our condemnation.

I repeat, therefore, that the habitual unreflectingness, which in certain countries may be susceptible of more or less palliation in most instances, can in this country be deemed blameless in none. The humblest and least educated of our countrymen must have wilfully neglected the inestimable privileges secured to all alike, if he has not himself found, if he has not from his own personal experience discovered, the sufficiency of the Scriptures\* in all knowledge requisite for a right performance of his duty as a man and a Christian. Of the labouring classes, who in all countries form the great majority of the inhabitants, more than this is not demanded, more than this is not perhaps generally desirable. They are *not sought for in public counsel*, nor need they be found where politic sentences are spoken. It is enough if every one is wise in the

\* See App. (A).—*Ed.*

working of his own craft: so best *will they maintain the state of the world.*

But you, my friends, to whom the following pages are more particularly addressed, as to men moving in the higher class of society,—you will, I hope, have availed yourselves of the ampler means entrusted to you by God's providence, for a more extensive study and a wider use of his revealed will and word. From you we have a right to expect a sober and meditative accommodation to your own times and country of those important truths declared in the inspired writings *for a thousand generations*, and of the awful examples, belonging to all ages, by which those truths are at once illustrated and confirmed. Would you feel conscious that you had shown yourselves unequal to your station in society,—would you stand degraded in your own eyes,—if you betrayed an utter want of information respecting the acts of human sovereigns and legislators? And should you not much rather be both ashamed and afraid to know yourselves in conversant with the acts and constitutions of God, whose law executeth itself, and whose Word is the foundation, the power, and the life of the universe? Do you hold it a requisite of your rank to show yourselves inquisitive concerning the expectations and plans of statesmen and state-councillors? Do you excuse it as natural curiosity, that you lend a listening ear to

the guesses of state-gazers, to the dark hints and open revilings of our self-inspired state-fortune-tellers, the wizards, that peep and mutter and forecast, alarmists by trade, and malcontents for their bread? And should you not feel a deeper interest in predictions which are permanent prophecies, because they are at the same time eternal truths? Predictions which in containing the grounds of fulfilment involve the principles of foresight, and teach the science of the future in its perpetual elements?

But I will struggle to believe that of those whom I now suppose myself addressing there are few who have not so employed their greater leisure and superior advantages as to render these remarks, if not wholly superfluous, yet personally inapplicable. In common with your worldly inferiors, you will indeed have directed your main attention to the promises and the information conveyed in the records of the Evangelists and Apostles;—promises, that need only a lively trust in them, on our own part, to be the means as well as the pledges of our eternal welfare—information that opens out to our knowledge a kingdom that is not of this world, thrones that cannot be shaken, and sceptres that can neither be broken nor transferred. Yet not the less on this account will you have looked back with a proportionate interest on the temporal

destinies of men and nations, stored up for our instruction in the archives of the Old Testament: not the less will you delight to retrace the paths by which Providence has led the kingdoms of this world through the valley of mortal life;—paths engraved with the footmarks of captains sent forth from the God of armies;—nations in whose guidance or chastisement the arm of Omnipotence itself was made bare.

Recent occurrences have given additional strength and fresh force to our sage poet's eulogy on the Jewish Prophets;—

As men divinely taught and better teaching  
The solid rules of civil government,  
In their majestic unaffected style,  
Than all the oratory of Greece and Rome.  
In them is plainest taught and easiest learnt  
What makes a nation happy and keeps it so,  
What ruins kingdoms and lays cities flat.

PAB. REG. iv. 354.

If there be any antidote to that restless craving for the wonders of the day, which, in conjunction with the appetite for publicity, is spreading like an efflorescence on the surface of our national character; if there exist means for deriving resignation from general discontent, means of building up with the very materials of political gloom that steadfast frame of hope which affords the only certain shelter from the throng of self-realising alarms,



at the same time that it is the natural home and workshop of all the active virtues ; that antidote and these means must be sought for in the collation of the present with the past, in the habit of thoughtfully assimilating the events of our own age to those of the time before us. If this be a moral advantage derivable from history in general, rendering its study, therefore, a moral duty for such as possess the opportunities of books, leisure, and education, it would be inconsistent, even with the name of believers, not to recur with pre-eminent interest to events and revolutions, the records of which are as much distinguished from all other history by their especial claims to divine authority, as the facts themselves were from all other facts by especial manifestation of divine interference. *Whatsoever things, saith Saint Paul, (Rom. xv. 4.) were written aforetime, were written for our learning ; that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.*

In the infancy of the world signs and wonders were requisite in order to startle and break down that superstition,—idolatrous in itself and the source of all other idolatry,—which tempts the natural man to seek the true cause and origin of public calamities in outward circumstances, persons and incidents ; in agents, therefore, that were themselves but surges of the same tide, passive

conductors of the one invisible influence, under which the total host of billows, in the whole line of successive impulse, swell and roll shoreward; there finally, each in its turn, to strike, roar, and be dissipated.

But with each miracle worked there was a truth revealed, which thenceforward was to act as its substitute. And if we think the Bible less applicable to us on account of the miracles, we degrade ourselves into mere slaves of sense and fancy, which are, indeed, the appointed medium between earth and heaven, but for that very cause stand in a desirable relation to spiritual truth then only, when, as a mere and passive medium, they yield a free passage to its light. It was only to overthrow the usurpation exercised in and through the senses, that the senses were miraculously appealed to; for reason and religion are their own evidence.\* The natural sun is in this respect a symbol of the spiritual. Ere he is fully arisen, and while his glories are still under veil, he calls up the breeze to chase away the usurping vapours of the night-season, and thus converts the air itself into the minister of its own purification: not, surely, in proof or elucidation of the light from heaven, but to prevent its interception.

Wherever, therefore, similar circumstances co-

\* See App. (B).—*Ed.*

exist with the same moral causes, the principles revealed, and the examples recorded, in the inspired writings render miracles superfluous: and if we neglect to apply truths in expectation of wonders, or under pretext of the cessation of the latter, we tempt God, and merit the same reply which our Lord gave to the Pharisees on a like occasion. *A wicked and an adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas,* (Matt. xvi. 4:) that is, a threatening call to repentance.\* Equally applicable and prophetic will the following verses be. *The queen of the South shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.—The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation and shall condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.* (Luke xi. 31, 32.) For have we not divine assurance that Christ is with his Church even to the end of the world? And what could the queen of the South, or the men of Nineveh have beholden, that could enter into competition with the events of our own times, in importance, in splendour, or even in strangeness and significancy?

\* See App. (C).—Ed.

The true origin of human events is so little susceptible of that kind of evidence which can compel our belief; so many are the disturbing forces which in every cycle of changes modify the motion given by the first projection; and every age has, or imagines it has, its own circumstances which render past experience no longer applicable to the present case; that there will never be wanting answers, and explanations, and specious flatteries of hope to persuade a people and its government that the history of the past is inapplicable to their case. And no wonder, if we read history for the facts instead of reading it for the sake of the general principles, which are to the facts, as the root and sap of a tree to its leaves: and no wonder, if history so read should find a dangerous rival in novels, nay, if the latter should be preferred to the former on the score even of probability. I well remember, that when the examples of former Jacobins, as Julius Cæsar, Cromwell, and the like, were adduced in France and England at the commencement of the French Consulate, it was ridiculed as pedantry and pedant's ignorance to fear a repetition of usurpation and military despotism at the close of the enlightened eighteenth century! Even so, in the very dawn of the late tempestuous day, when the revolutions of Corcyra, the proscriptions of the Reformers,

Marius, Cæsar, and the like, and the direful effects of the levelling tenets in the Peasants' War in Germany, were urged on the Convention, and its vindicators ; I well remember that the *Magi* of the day, the true citizens of the world, the *plusquam-perfecti* of patriotism, gave us set proofs that similar results were impossible, and that it was an insult to so philosophical an age, to so enlightened a nation, to dare direct the public eye towards them as to lights of warning ! Alas ! like lights in the stern of a vessel, they illumined the path only that had been past over !

The politic Florentine \* has observed, that there are brains of three races. The one understands of itself ; the other understands as much as is shown it by others ; the third neither understands of itself, nor what is shown it by others. In our times there are more perhaps who belong to the third class from vanity and acquired frivolity of mind, than from natural incapacity. It is no uncommon weakness with those who are honoured with the acquaintance of the great, to attribute national events to particular persons, particular measures, to the errors of one man, to the intrigues of another,

\* *Sono di tre generazioni cervelli: l'uno intende per se; l'altro intende quanto da altri gli è mostro; e il terzo non intende nè per se stesso nè per dimostrazione di altri.*

Il Principe, c. xxii.

to any possible spark of a particular occasion, rather than to the true proximate cause (and which alone deserves the name of a cause), the predominant state of public opinion. And still less are they inclined to refer the latter to the ascendancy of speculative principles, and the scheme or mode of thinking in vogue. I have known men, who with significant nods and the pitying contempt of smiles have denied all influence to the corruptions of moral and political philosophy, and with much solemnity have proceeded to solve the riddle of the French Revolution by Anecdotes! Yet it would not be difficult, by an unbroken chain of historic facts, to demonstrate that the most important changes in the commercial relations of the world had their origin in the closets or lonely walks of uninterested theorists;—that the mighty epochs of commerce, that have changed the face of empires; nay, the most important of those discoveries and improvements in the mechanic arts, which have numerically increased our population beyond what the wisest statesmen of Elizabeth's reign deemed possible, and again doubled this population virtually; the most important, I say, of those inventions that in their results

———— best uphold

War by her two main nerves, iron and gold—

had their origin not in the cabinets of statesmen,

or in the practical insight of men of business, but in the visions of recluse genius. To the immense majority of men, even in civilised countries, speculative philosophy has ever been, and must ever remain, a *terra incognita*. Yet it is not the less true, that all the epoch-forming revolutions of the Christian world, the revolutions of religion and with them the civil, social, and domestic habits of the nations concerned, have coincided with the rise and fall of metaphysical systems.\* So few are the minds that really govern the machine of society, and so incomparably more numerous and more important are the indirect consequences of things than their foreseen and direct effects.

It is with nations as with individuals. In tranquil moods and peaceable times we are quite practical. Facts only and cool common sense are then in fashion. But let the winds of passion swell, and straitway men begin to generalise; to connect by remotest analogies; to express the most universal positions of reason in the most glowing figures of fancy; in short, to feel particular truths and mere facts, as poor, cold, narrow, and incommensurate with their feelings.

With his wonted fidelity to nature, our own

\* This thought might also be applied to, and exemplified by, the successive epochs in the history of the Fine Arts from the tenth century. 1827.

great poet has placed the greater number of his profoundest maxims and general truths, both political and moral, not in the mouths of men at ease, but of men under the influence of passion, when the mighty thoughts overmaster and become the tyrants of the mind that has brought them forth. In his *Lear*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, principles of deepest insight and widest interest fly off like sparks from the glowing iron under the loud forge-hammer.\*

\* It seems a paradox only to the unthinking, and it is a fact that none, but the unread in history, will deny, that in periods of popular tumult and innovation the more abstract a notion is, the more readily has it been found to combine, the closer has appeared its affinity, with the feelings of a people and with all their immediate impulses to action. At the commencement of the French Revolution, in the remotest villages every tongue was employed in echoing and enforcing the almost geometrical abstractions of the physiocratic politicians and economists. The public roads were crowded with armed enthusiasts disputing on the inalienable sovereignty of the people, the imprescriptible laws of the pure reason, and the universal constitution, which, as rising out of the nature and rights of man as man, all nations alike were under the obligation of adopting. Turn over the fugitive writings, that are still extant, of the age of Luther: peruse the pamphlets and loose sheets that came out in flights during the reign of Charles I. and the Republic; and you will find in these one continued comment on the aphorism of Lord Bacon (a man assuredly sufficiently acquainted with the extent of secret and personal influence), that the knowledge of the speculative principles of men in general between the age of twenty and thirty is the one great



A calm and detailed examination of the facts justifies me to my own mind in hazarding the bold assertion, that the fearful blunders of the late dread Revolution, and all the calamitous mistakes of its opponents from its commencement even to the æra of loftier principles and wiser measures (an æra, that began with, and ought to be named from, the war of the Spanish and Portuguese insurgents) every failure with all its gloomy results may be unanswerably deduced from the neglect of some maxim or other that had been established by clear reasoning and plain facts in the writings of Thucydides, Tacitus, Machiavel, Bacon, or Harrington. These are red-letter names even in the almanacks of worldly wisdom: and yet I dare challenge all the critical benches of infidelity to point out any one important truth, any one efficient practical direction or warning, which did not pre-exist, (and for the most part in a sounder, more intelligible, and more comprehensive form) in the Bible.

In addition to this, the Hebrew legislator, and the other inspired poets, prophets, historians and moralists of the Jewish Church have two peculiar advantages in their favour. First, their particular

source of political prophecy. And Sir Philip Sidney regarded the adoption of one set of principles in the Netherlands, as a proof of the divine agency and the fountain of all the events and successes of that Revolution.

rules and prescripts flow directly and visibly from universal principles, as from a fountain: they flow from principles and ideas that are not so properly said to be confirmed by reason as to be reason itself. Principles in act and procession, disjoined from which, and from the emotions that inevitably accompany the actual intuition of their truth, the widest maxims of prudence are like arms without hearts, muscles without nerves. Secondly, from the very nature of these principles, as taught in the Bible, they are understood in exact proportion as they are believed and felt. The regulator is never separated from the main spring. For the words of the Apostle are literally and philosophically true: *We* (that is, the human race) *live by faith*. Whatever we do or know that in kind is different from the brute creation, has its origin in a determination of the reason to have faith and trust in itself. This, its first act of faith, is scarcely less than identical with its own being. *Implicite*, it is the *copula*—it contains the possibility—of every position, to which there exists any correspondence in reality.\* It is itself, therefore, the

\* I mean that, but for the confidence which we place in the assertions of our reason and conscience, we could have no certainty of the reality and actual outness of the material world. It might be affirmed that in what we call 'sleep' every one has a dream of his own; and that in what we call 'awake,' whole communities dream nearly alike. It is!—

realising principle, the spiritual *substratum* of the whole complex body of truths. This primal act of faith is enunciated in the word, God: a faith not derived from, but itself the ground and source of, experience, and without which the fleeting chaos of facts would no more form experience, than the dust of the grave can of itself make a living man. The imperative and oracular form of the inspired Scripture is the form of reason itself in all things purely rational and moral.

If Scripture be the word of Divine Wisdom, we might anticipate that it would in all things be distinguished from other books, as the Supreme Reason, whose knowledge is creative, and antecedent to the things known, is distinguished from the understanding, or creaturely mind of the individual, the acts of which are posterior to the things which it records and arranges. Man alone was created in the image of God: a position groundless and inexplicable, if the reason in man do not differ from the understanding. For this the inferior animals (many at least) possess in degree: and assuredly the divine image or idea is not a thing of degrees.

Hence it follows that what is expressed in the Scriptures is implied in all absolute science. The

is a sense of reason: the senses can only say—It seems!  
1827.

latter whispers what the former utter as with the voice of a trumpet. *As sure as God liveth*, is the pledge and assurance of every positive truth, that is asserted by the reason. The human understanding musing on many things snatches at truth, but is frustrated and disheartened by the fluctuating nature of its objects;\* its conclusions therefore are timid and uncertain, and it hath no way of giving permanence to things but by reducing them to abstractions. *Hardly do we guess aright at things that are upon earth, and with labour do we find the things that are before us ; but all certain knowledge is in the power of God, and a presence from above.* So only have the ways of men been reformed, and every doctrine that contains a saving truth, and all acts pleasing to God (in other words, all actions consonant with human nature, in its original intention) are through wisdom ; that is, the rational spirit of man.

This then is the prerogative of the Bible ; this is the privilege of its believing students. With them the principle of knowledge is likewise a spring

\* Ποταμῷ γὰρ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐμβῆναι δις τῷ αὐτῷ καθ' Ἡράκλειτον, οὔτε θνητῆς οὐσίας δις ἀψασθαι κατὰ ξέιν' ἀλλὰ ὀξύτητι καὶ τάχει μεταβολῆς σκιδνησι καὶ πάλιν συνάγει, μᾶλλον δὲ οὐδὲ πάλιν οὐδὲ ὑστερον ἀλλ' ἅμα συνίσταται καὶ ἀπολείπει, καὶ προσεῖσι καὶ ἀπεισι· ὅθεν οὐδ' εἰς τὸ εἶναι περαίνει τὸ γιγνόμενον αὐτῆς τῷ μηδέποτε λήγειν, μηδ' ἰστᾶσθαι τὴν γένεσιν, κ. τ. λ.

PLUTARCH'S *De EI.* apud Delphos, c. xviii.

and principle of action. And as it is the only certain knowledge, so are the actions that flow from it the only ones on which a secure reliance can be placed. The understanding may suggest motives, may avail itself of motives, and make judicious conjectures respecting the probable consequences of actions. But the knowledge taught in the Scriptures produces the motives, involves the consequences; and its highest *formula* is still: *As sure as God liveth*, so will it be unto thee! Strange as this position will appear to such as forget that motives can be causes only in a secondary and improper sense, inasmuch as the man makes the motive, not the motive the man; yet all history bears evidence to its truth. The sense of expediency, the cautious balancing of comparative advantages, the constant wakefulness to the *Cui bono?*—in connexion with the *Quid mihi?*—all these are in their places in the routine of conduct, by which the individual provides for himself the real or supposed wants of to-day and to-morrow: and in quiet times and prosperous circumstances a nation presents an aggregate of such individuals, a busy ant-hill in calm and sunshine. By the happy organisation of a well-governed society the contradictory interests of ten millions of such individuals may neutralise each other, and be reconciled in the unity of the national interest.

But whence did this happy organisation first come? Was it a tree transplanted from Paradise, with all its branches in full fruitage? Or was it sowed in sunshine? Was it in vernal breezes and gentle rains that it fixed its roots, and grew and strengthened? Let history answer these questions. With blood was it planted; it was rocked in tempests; the goat, the ass, and the stag gnawed it; the wild boar has whetted his tusks on its bark. The deep scars are still extant on its trunk, and the path of the lightning may be traced among its higher branches. And even after its full growth, in the season of its strength, *when its height reached to the heaven, and the sight thereof to all the earth*, the whirlwind has more than once forced its stately top to touch the ground: it has been bent like a bow, and sprang back like a shaft. Mightier powers were at work than expediency ever yet called up; yea, mightier than the mere understanding can comprehend. One confirmation of the latter assertion you may find in the history of our country, written by the same Scotch philosopher who devoted his life to the undermining of the Christian religion; and expended his last breath in a blasphemous regret that he had not survived it;—by the same heartless sophist who, in this island, was the main pioneer of that atheistic philosophy, which in France transvenomed the

natural thirst of truth into the *hydrophobia* of a wild and homeless scepticism; the Elias of that spirit of Anti-christ, which

——— still promising  
Freedom, itself too sensual to be free,  
Poisons life's amities and cheats the soul  
Of faith, and quiet hope and all that lifts  
And all that soothes the spirit! \*

This inadequacy of the mere understanding to the apprehension of moral greatness we may trace in this historian's cool systematic attempt to steal away every feeling of reverence for every great name by a scheme of motives, in which as often as possible the efforts and enterprises of heroic spirits are attributed to this or that paltry view of the most despicable selfishness. But in the majority of instances this would have been too palpably false and slanderous: and therefore the founders and martyrs of our Church and Constitution, of our civil and religious liberty, are represented as fanatics and bewildered enthusiasts. But histories incomparably more authentic than Mr. Hume's, (nay, spite of himself even his own history,) confirm by irrefragable evidence the aphorism of ancient wisdom, that nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm. For what is enthusiasm but the oblivion and swallowing-up of self

\* *Post. Works*, I. p. 137.—*Ed.*

in an object dearer than self, or in an idea more vivid? How this is produced in the enthusiasm of wickedness, I have explained in the second Comment annexed to this Discourse. But in the genuine enthusiasm of morals, religion, and patriotism, this enlargement and elevation of the soul above its mere self attest the presence, and accompany the intuition, of ultimate principles alone. These alone can interest the undegraded human spirit deeply and enduringly, because these alone belong to its essence, and will remain with it permanently.

Notions, the depthless abstractions of fleeting *phenomena*, the shadows of sailing vapours, the colourless repetitions of rainbows, have effected their utmost when they have added to the distinctness of our knowledge. For this very cause they are of themselves adverse to lofty emotion, and it requires the influence of a light and warmth, not their own, to make them crystallise into a semblance of growth. But every principle is actualised by an idea; and every idea is living, productive, partaketh of infinity, and (as Bacon has sublimely observed) containeth an endless power of semination. Hence it is, that science, which consists wholly in ideas and principles, is power. *Scientia et potentia* (saith the same philosopher) *in idem coincidunt*. Hence too it is, that notions, linked arguments,



reference to particular facts and calculations of prudence, influence only the comparatively few, the men of leisurely minds who have been trained up to them : and even these few they influence but faintly. But for the reverse, I appeal to the general character of the doctrines which have collected the most numerous sects, and acted upon the moral being of the converts with a force that might well seem supernatural. The great principles of our religion, the sublime ideas spoken out everywhere in the Old and New Testament, resemble the fixed stars, which appear of the same size to the naked as to the armed eye ; the magnitude of which the telescope may rather seem to diminish than to increase. At the annunciation of principles, of ideas, the soul of man awakes and starts up, as an exile in a far distant land at the unexpected sounds of his native language, when after long years of absence, and almost of oblivion, he is suddenly addressed in his own mother-tongue. He weeps for joy, and embraces the speaker as his brother. How else can we explain the fact so honourable to Great Britain, that the poorest \*

\* The reader will remember the anecdote told with so much humour in Goldsmith's Essay. But this is not the first instance where the mind in its hour of meditation finds matter of admiration and elevating thought in circumstances that in a different mood had excited its mirth.

amongst us will contend with as much enthusiasm as the richest for the rights of property? These rights are the spheres and necessary conditions of free agency. But free agency contains the idea of the free will; and in this he intuitively knows the sublimity, and the infinite hopes, fears, and capabilities of his own nature. On what other ground but the cognateness of ideas and principles to man as man does the nameless soldier rush to the combat in defence of the liberties or the honour of his country?—Even men woefully neglectful of the precepts of religion will shed their blood for its truth.

Alas!—the main hindrance to the use of the Scriptures, as your manual, lies in the notion that you are already acquainted with its contents. Something new must be presented to you, wholly new and wholly out of yourselves; for whatever is within us must be as old as the first dawn of human reason. Truths of all others the most awful and mysterious and at the same time of universal interest are considered so true as to lose all the powers of truth, and lie bed-ridden in the dormitory of the soul, side by side with the most despised and exploded errors. But it should not be so with you! The pride of education, the sense of consistency should preclude the objection: for would you not be ashamed to apply it to the works of

Tacitus, or of Shakespeare? Above all, the rank which you hold, the influence you possess, the powers you may be called to wield, give a special unfitness to this frivolous craving for novelty. To find no contradiction in the union of old and new, to contemplate the Ancient of days, his words and his works, with a feeling as fresh as if they were now first springing forth at his *fiat*—this characterises the minds that feel the riddle of the world and may help to unravel it. This, most of all things, will raise you above the mass of mankind, and therefore will best entitle and qualify you to guide and control them. You say, you are already familiar with the Scriptures. With the words, perhaps, but in any other sense you might as wisely boast of your familiar acquaintance with the rays of the sun, and under that pretence turn away your eyes from the light of heaven.

Or would you wish for authorities, for great examples? You may find them in the writings of Thuanus, of Clarendon, of More, of Raleigh; and in the life and letters of the heroic Gustavus Adolphus. But these, though eminent statesmen, were Christians, and might lie under the thralldom of habit and prejudice. I will refer you then to the authorities of two great men, both pagans; but removed from each other by many centuries, and not more distant in their ages than in their characters

and situations. The first shall be that of Heraclitus, the sad and recluse philosopher. Πολυμαθίη νόον οὐ διδάσκει· Σίβυλλα δὲ μαινομένη στόματι ἀγελαστά καὶ ἀκαλλώπιστα καὶ ἀμύριστα φθεγγομένη χιλίων ἔτων ἐξικνεῖται τῇ φωνῇ διὰ τὸν θεόν.\* Shall we hesitate to apply to the prophets of God, what could be affirmed of the Sibyls by a philosopher whom Socrates, the prince of philosophers, venerated for the profundity of his wisdom?

For the other, I will refer you to the darling of the polished court of Augustus, to the man whose works have been in all ages deemed the models of good sense, and are still the pocket companions of those who pride themselves on uniting the scholar with the gentleman. This accomplished man of the world has given an account of the subjects of conversation between the illustrious statesmen who

\* Multiscience (or a variety and quantity of acquired knowledge) does not teach intelligence. But the Sibyl with wild enthusiastic mouth shrilling forth unmirthful, unornate, and unperfumed truths, reaches to a thousand years, with her voice through the power of God.

————— Not her's

To win the sense by words of rhetoric,  
Lip-blossoms breathing perishable sweets;  
But by the power of the informing Word  
Roll sounding onward through a thousand years  
Her deep prophetic bodements.

Lit. Rem. III. p. 419.—*Ed.*

governed, and the brightest luminaries who then adorned, the empire of the civilised world :

*Sermo oritur non de villis domibusve alienis,  
Nec male necne Lepos saltet. Sed quod magis ad nos  
Pertinet, et nescire malum est, agitur : utrumne  
Divitiis homines, an sint virtute beati ;  
Et quod sit natura boni, summumque quid ejus.\**

Hor. Serm. II. t. 6. 71.

Berkeley indeed asserts, and is supported in his assertion by the great statesmen, Lord Bacon and Sir Walter Raleigh, that without an habitual interest in these subjects a man may be a dexterous intriguer, but never can be a statesman.

But do you require some one or more particular passage from the Bible, that may at once illustrate and exemplify its applicability to the changes and fortunes of empires ? Of the numerous chapters that relate to the Jewish tribes, their enemies and allies, before and after their division into two kingdoms, it would be more difficult to state a single one from which some guiding light might not be struck. And in nothing is Scriptural history more strongly contrasted with the histories

\* Conversation arises not concerning the country seats or families of strangers in a neighbourhood, or whether the dancing hare [the dancer Lepos] performed well or ill. But we discuss what more nearly concerns us, and which it is an evil not to know : whether men are made happy by wealth or by virtue ? In what consists the nature of good ? And what is the supreme good, and to be our ultimate aim ?

of highest note in the present age, than in its freedom from the hollowness of abstractions. While the latter present a shadow-fight of things and quantities, the former gives us the history of men, and balances the important influence of individual minds with the previous state of the national morals and manners, in which, as constituting a specific susceptibility, it presents to us the true cause both of the influence itself, and of the weal or woe that were its consequents. How should it be otherwise? The histories and political economy of the present and preceding century partake in the general contagion of its mechanic philosophy, and are the product of an unenlivened generalising understanding. In the Scriptures they are the living educts of the imagination; of that reconciling and mediatory power, which incorporating the reason in images of the sense, and organising (as it were) the flux of the senses by the permanence and self-circling energies of the reason, gives birth to a system of symbols, harmonious in themselves, and consubstantial with the truths of which they are the conductors. These are the *wheels* which Ezekiel beheld, when the hand of the Lord was upon him, and he saw visions of God as he sate among the captives by the river of Chebar. *Whithersoever the Spirit was to go, the wheels went, and thither was their spirit to go:—for the spirit of the living*

*creature was in the wheels also.\** The truths and the symbols that represent them move in conjunction and form the living chariot that bears up (for us) the throne of the Divine Humanity. Hence, by a derivative, indeed, but not a divided, influence, and though in a secondary yet in more than a metaphorical sense, the Sacred Book is worthily entitled *the Word of God*. Hence too, its contents present to us the stream of time continuous as life and a symbol of eternity, inasmuch as the past and the future are virtually contained in the present. According therefore to our relative position on the banks of this stream the Sacred History becomes prophetic, the Sacred Prophecies historical, while the power and substance of both inhere in its laws, its promises, and its comminations. In the Scriptures therefore both facts and persons must of necessity have a two-fold significance, a past and a future, a temporary and a perpetual, a particular and a universal application. They must be at once portraits and ideals.

*Eheu! paupertina philosophia in paupertinam religionem ducit:*—A hunger-bitten and idea-less philosophy naturally produces a starveling and comfortless religion. It is among the miseries of the present age that it recognises no *medium* between literal and metaphorical. Faith is either

\* *Ezek.*, i. 20.

to be buried in the dead letter, or its name and honours usurped by a counterfeit product of the mechanical understanding, which in the blindness of self-complacency confounds symbols with allegories. Now an allegory is but a translation of abstract notions into a picture-language, which is itself nothing but an abstraction from objects of the senses ; the principal being more worthless even than its phantom proxy, both alike unsubstantial, and the former shapeless to boot. On the other hand a symbol (*ὁ ἔστιν ἀεὶ ταυτηγόρικον*) is characterised by a translucence of the special in the individual, or of the general in the special, or of the universal in the general ; above all by the translucence of the eternal through and in the temporal. It always partakes of the reality which it renders intelligible ; and while it enunciates the whole, abides itself as a living part in that unity of which it is the representative. The other are but empty echoes which the fancy arbitrarily associates with apparitions of matter, less beautiful but not less shadowy than the sloping orchard or hill-side pasture-field seen in the transparent lake below. Alas, for the flocks that are to be led forth to such pastures ! *It shall even be as when a hungry man dreameth, and behold, he eateth ; but he awaketh and his soul is empty : or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and behold he drinketh ; but he awaketh*



*and behold, he is faint ! \* O ! that we would seek for the bread which was given from heaven, that we should eat thereof and be strengthened ! O that we would draw at the well at which the flocks of our forefathers had living water drawn for them, even that water which, instead of mocking the thirst of him to whom it is given, becomes a well within himself springing up to life everlasting !*

When we reflect how large a part of our present knowledge and civilisation is owing, directly or indirectly, to the Bible ; when we are compelled to admit, as a fact of history, that the Bible has been the main lever by which the moral and intellectual character of Europe has been raised to its present comparative height ; we should be struck, methinks, by the marked and prominent difference of this book from the works which it is now the fashion to quote as guides and authorities in morals, politics, and history. I will point out a few of the excellencies by which the one is distinguished, and shall leave it to your own judgment and recollection to perceive and apply the contrast to the productions of highest name in these latter days. In the Bible every agent appears and acts as a self-subsisting individual ; each has a life of its own, and yet all are one life. The elements of necessity and free-will are reconciled

\* *Is. xxix. 8.—Ed.*

in the higher power of an omnipresent Providence, that predestinates the whole in the moral freedom of the integral parts. Of this the Bible never suffers us to lose sight. The root is never detached from the ground. It is God everywhere: and all creatures conform to his decrees, the righteous by performance of the law, the disobedient by the sufferance of the penalty.

Suffer me to inform or remind you, that there is a threefold necessity. There is a logical, and there is a mathematical necessity; but the latter is always hypothetical, and both subsist formally only, not in any real object. Only by the intuition and immediate spiritual consciousness of the idea of God, as the One and Absolute, at once the ground and the cause, who alone containeth in himself the ground of his own nature, and therein of all natures, do we arrive at the third, which alone is a real objective, necessity. Here the immediate consciousness decides: the idea is its own evidence, and is insusceptible of all other. It is necessarily groundless and indemonstrable; because it is itself the ground of all possible demonstration. The reason hath faith in itself in its own revelations. Ο λόγος ἑφῆ. *Ipsè dixit.* So it is: for it is so. All the necessity of casual relations (which the mere understanding reduces, and must reduce to co-existence and regular

succession\* in the objects of which they are predicated, and to habit and association in the mind predicated) depends on, or rather inheres in, the idea of the omnipresent and absolute: for this it is, in which the possible is one and the same with the real and the necessary. Herein the Bible differs from all the books of Greek philosophy, and in a two-fold manner. It doth not affirm a divine nature only, but a God: and not a God only, but the living God. Hence in the Scriptures alone is the *jus divinum*, or direct relation of the state and its magistracy to the Supreme Being, taught as a vital and indispensable part of all moral and of all political wisdom, even as the Jewish alone was a true theocracy.

Were it my object to touch on the present state of public affairs in this kingdom, or on the prospective measures in agitation respecting our sister island, I would direct your most serious meditations to the latter period of the reign of Solomon, and to the revolutions in the reign of Rehoboam, his successor. But I should tread on glowing embers. I will turn to a subject on which all men of reflection are at length in agreement—the causes of the Revolution and fearful chastise-

\* See Hume's Essays. The sophist evades, as Cicero long ago remarked, the better half of the predicament, which is not *præire* but *efficienter præire*.

ment of France. We have learned to trace them back to the rising importance of the commercial and manufacturing class, and its incompatibility with the old feudal privileges and prescriptions; to the spirit of sensuality and ostentation, which from the court had spread through all the towns and cities of the kingdom; to the predominance of a presumptuous and irreligious philosophy; to the extreme over-rating of the knowledge and power given by the improvements of the arts and sciences, especially those of astronomy, mechanics, and a wonder-working chemistry; to an assumption of prophetic power, and the general conceit that states and governments might be and ought to be constructed as machines, every movement of which might be foreseen and taken into previous calculation; to the consequent multitude of plans and constitutions, of planners and constitution-makers, and the remorseless arrogance with which the authors and proselytes of every new proposal were ready to realise it, be the cost what it might in the established rights, or even in the lives, of men; in short, to restlessness, presumption, sensual indulgence, and the idolatrous reliance on false philosophy in the whole domestic, social, and political life of the stirring and effective part of the community: these all acting, at once and together, on a mass of materials supplied by the

unfeeling extravagance and oppressions of the government, which *shewed no mercy, and very heavily laid its yoke.*

Turn then to the chapter from which the last words were cited, and read the following seven verses ; and I am deceived if you will not be compelled to admit that the Prophet revealed the true philosophy of the French revolution more than two thousand years before it became a sad irrevocable truth of history. *And thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever : so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it. Therefore, hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me ! I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children. But these two things shall come to thee in a moment, in one day ; the loss of children, and widowhood ; they shall come upon thee in their perfection, for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments. For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness ; thou hast said, none seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee ; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me. Therefore shall evil come upon thee, thou shalt not know\**

\* The reader will scarcely fail to find in this verse a remembrancer of the sudden setting-in of the frost, a

*from whence it riseth: and mischief shall fall upon thee, thou shalt not be able to put it off; and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know. Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail. Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee. (Is. xlvii. 7, &c.)*

There is a grace that would enable us to take up vipers, and the evil thing shall not hurt us: a spiritual alchemy which can transmute poisons into a *panacea*. We are counselled by our Lord himself to make unto ourselves friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness: and in this age of sharp contrasts and grotesque combinations it

fortnight before the usual time (in a country too, where the commencement of its two seasons is in general scarcely less regular than that of the wet and dry seasons between the tropics) which caused, and the desolation which accompanied, the flight from Moscow. The Russians baffled the physical forces of the imperial Jacobin, because they were inaccessible to his imaginary forces. The faith in St. Nicholas kept off at safe distance the more pernicious superstition of the destinies of Napoleon the Great. The English in the Peninsula overcame the real, because they set at defiance, and had heard only to despise, the imaginary powers of the irresistible Emperor. Thank Heaven! the heart of the country was sound at the core.

would be a wise method of sympathising with the tone and spirit of the times, if we elevated even our daily newspapers and political journals into comments on the Bible.

When I named this Essay a Sermon, I sought to prepare the inquirers after it for the absence of all the usual softenings suggested by worldly prudence, of all compromise between truth and courtesy. But not even as a sermon would I have addressed the present discourse to a promiscuous audience; and for this reason I likewise announced it in the title-page, as exclusively *ad clerum*; that is (in the old and wide sense of the word), to men of clerly acquirements of whatever profession. I would that the greater part of our publications could be thus directed, each to its appropriate class of readers. But this cannot be. For among other odd burs and kecksies, the misgrowth of our luxuriant activity, we have now a Reading Public\*—as strange

\* Some participle passive in the diminutive form, *Eruditulorum Natio* for instance, might seem at first sight a fuller and more exact designation; but the superior force and humour of the former become evident whenever the phrase occurs as a step or stair in a *climax* of irony. By way of example take the following sentences, transcribed from a work demonstrating that the New Testament was intended exclusively for the primitive converts from Judaism, was accommodated to their prejudices, and is of no authority, as a rule of faith, for Christians in general. "The Reading Public in this enlightened age and thinking nation, by its

a phrase, methinks, as ever forced a splenetic smile on the staid countenance of meditation; and yet no fiction. For our readers have, in good truth, multiplied exceedingly, and have waxed proud. It would require the intrepid accuracy of a Colquhoun to venture at the precise number of that vast company only, whose heads and hearts are dieted at

favourable reception of liberal ideas, has long demonstrated the benign influence of that profound philosophy which has already emancipated us from so many absurd prejudices held in superstitious awe by our deluded forefathers. But the dark age yielded at length to the dawning light of reason and common sense at the glorious, though imperfect, Revolution. The people can be no longer duped or scared out of their imprescriptible and inalienable right to judge and decide for themselves on all important questions of government and religion. The scholastic jargon of jarring articles and metaphysical creeds may continue for a time to deform our Church-establishment; and like the grotesque figures in the niches of our old Gothic cathedrals, may serve to remind the nation of its former barbarism; but the universal suffrage of a free and enlightened Public," &c. &c.

Among the revolutions worthy of notice, the change in the nature of the introductory sentences and prefatory matter in serious books is not the least striking. The same gross flattery which disgusts us in the dedications to individuals in the elder writers, is now transferred to the nation at large, or the Reading Public: while the Jeremiads of our old moralists, and their angry denunciations concerning the ignorance, immorality, and irreligion of the People, appear (*mutatis mutandis*, and with an appeal to the worst passions, envy, discontent, scorn, vindictiveness,) in the shape of bitter libels on ministers, parliament, the clergy: in short, on the State and Church, and all persons employed in them.



the two public ordinaries of literature, the circulating libraries and the periodical press. But what is the result? Does the inward man thrive on this regimen? Alas! if the average health of the consumers may be judged of by the articles of largest consumption; if the secretions may be conjectured from the ingredients of the dishes that are found best suited to their palates; from all that I have seen, either of the banquet or the guests, I shall utter my *profaccia* with a desponding sigh. From a popular philosophy and a philosophic populace, Good Sense deliver us!

At present, however, I am to imagine for myself a very different audience. I appeal exclusively to men, from whose station and opportunities I may dare to anticipate a respectable portion of that sound book-learnedness, into which our old public schools still continue to initiate their pupils. I appeal to men in whom I may hope to find, if not philosophy, yet occasional impulses at least to philosophic thought. And here, as far as my own experience extends, I can announce one favourable symptom. The notion of our measureless superiority in good sense to our ancestors, so general at the commencement of the French Revolution, and for some years before it, is out of fashion. We hear, at least, less of the jargon of this enlightened age. After fatiguing itself, as performer or spectator

in the giddy figure-dance of political changes, Europe has seen the shallow foundations of its self-complacent faith give way; and among men of influence and property, we have now more reason to apprehend the stupor of despondence, than the extravagancies of hope, unsustained by experience, or of self-confidence not bottomed on principle.

In this rank of life the danger lies, not in any tendency to innovation, but in the choice of the means for preventing it. And here my apprehensions point to two opposite errors; each of which deserves a separate notice. The first consists in a disposition to think, that as the peace of nations has been disturbed by the diffusion of a false light, it may be re-established by excluding the people from all knowledge and all prospect of amelioration. O! never, never! Reflection and stirrings of mind, with all their restlessness, and all the errors that result from their imperfection, from the Too much, because Too little, are come into the world. The powers that awaken and foster the spirit of curiosity are to be found in every village: books are in every hovel. The infant's cries are hushed with picture-books: and the cottager's child sheds his first bitter tears over pages, which render it impossible for the man to be treated or governed as a child. Here as in so many other cases, the inconveniences that have arisen from a thing's

having become too general are best removed by making it universal.

The other and contrary mistake proceeds from the assumption, that a national education will have been realised whenever the people at large have been taught to read and write. Now among the many means to the desired end, this is doubtless one, and not the least important. But neither is it the most so. Much less can it be considered to constitute education, which consists in educating the faculties and forming the habits; the means varying according to the sphere in which the individuals to be educated are likely to act and become useful. I do not hesitate to declare, that whether I consider the nature of the discipline adopted,\* or the plan of poisoning the children of the poor with a sort of potential infidelity under the "liberal idea" of teaching those points only of religious faith, in which all denominations agree, I cannot but denounce the so called Lancasterian schools as pernicious beyond all power of compensation by

\* See Mr. Southey's Tract on the New or Madras system of education: especially towards the conclusion, where with exquisite humour as well as with his usual poignancy of wit he has detailed Joseph Lancaster's disciplinarian inventions. But even in the schools, that used to be called Lancasterian, these are, I believe, discontinued. The true perfection of discipline in a school is—the *maximum* of watchfulness with the *minimum* of punishment.

the new acquirement of reading and writing. But take even Dr. Bell's original and unsophisticated plan, which I myself regard as an especial gift of Providence to the human race; and suppose this incomparable machine, this vast moral steam-engine, to have been adopted and in free motion throughout the Empire; it would yet appear to me a most dangerous delusion to rely on it as if this of itself formed an efficient national education. We cannot, I repeat, honour the scheme too highly as a prominent and necessary part of the great process; but it will neither supersede nor can it be substituted for sundry other measures, that are at least equally important. And these are such measures, too, as unfortunately involve the necessity of sacrifices on the side of the rich and powerful more costly and far more difficult than the yearly subscription of a few pounds;—such measures as demand more self-denial than the expenditure of time in a committee or of eloquence in a public meeting.

Nay, let Dr. Bell's philanthropic end have been realised, and the proposed *modicum* of learning have become universal; yet convinced of its insufficiency to stem the strong currents set in from an opposite point, I dare not assure myself that it may not be driven backward by them and become confluent with the evils which it was intended to preclude.\*

\* See the Report of the House of Commons' Committee

What other measures I had in contemplation, it has been my endeavour to explain elsewhere. But I am greatly deceived, if one preliminary to an efficient education of the labouring classes be not the recurrence to a more manly discipline of the intellect on the part of the learned themselves, in short a thorough re-casting of the moulds, in which the minds of our gentry, the characters of our future land-owners, magistrates and senators, are to receive their shape and fashion. O what treasures of practical wisdom would be once more brought into open day by the solution of this problem! Suffice it for the present to hint the master-thought. The first man, on whom the light of an idea dawned, did in that same moment receive the spirit and credentials of a law-giver: and as long as man shall exist, so long will the possession of that antecedent knowledge (the maker and master of all profitable experience) which exists only in the power of an idea, be the one lawful qualification of all dominion in the world of the senses. Without this, experience itself is but a Cyclops walking backwards under the fascination of the past: and we are indebted to a lucky coincidence of outward circumstances and contingencies, least of all things to be calculated on

on the increase of crime;—within the last twenty years quintupled over all England, and in several counties decupled.  
28th September, 1828.

in times like the present, if this one-eyed experience does not seduce its worshipper into practical anachronisms.

But alas! the halls of old philosophy have been so long deserted, that we circle them at shy distance as the haunt of phantoms and chimæras.\* The sacred grove of Academus is holden in like regard with the unfoodful trees in the shadowy world of Maro that had a dream attached to every leaf. The very terms of ancient wisdom are worn out, or (far worse!) stamped on baser metal: and whoever should have the hardihood to re-proclaim its solemn truths must commence with a glossary.

In reviewing the foregoing pages, I am apprehensive that they may be thought to resemble the overflow of an earnest mind rather than an orderly premeditated composition. Yet this imperfection of form will not be altogether uncompensated, if it should be the means of presenting with greater liveliness the feelings and impressions under which they were written. Still less shall I regret this defect if it should induce some future traveller engaged in the like journey to take the same station and to look through the same *medium* at the one main object which amid all my discursions I have still kept in view. The more, however, doth

\* See App. (E).--*Ed.*

it behove me not to conclude this address without attempting to recapitulate in as few and as plain words as possible the sum and substance of its contents.

There is a state of mind indispensable for all perusal of the Scriptures to edification, which must be learned by experience, and can be described only by negatives. It is the direct opposite of that which, if a moral passage of Scripture were cited, would prompt a man to reply, "Who does not know this?" But if the quotation should have been made in support of some article of faith, this same habit of mind will betray itself in different individuals, by apparent contraries, which yet are but the two poles, or *plus* and *minus* states, of the same influence. The latter, or the negative, pole may be suspected, as often as you hear a comment on some high and doctrinal text introduced with the words, "It only means so and so!" For instance, I object to a professed free-thinking Christian the following solemn enunciation of *the riches of the glory of the mystery hid from ages and from generations* by the philosophic Apostle of the Gentiles:—*Who* (namely, the Father) *hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the*

*invisible God, the firstborn\* of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the Church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell: And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. Col. i. 13, &c.* What is the reply?—Why, that by these words (very bold and figurative words it must be confessed, yet still) St. Paul only meant that the universal and eternal truths of morality and a future state had been reproclaimed by an inspired teacher and confirmed by miracles!† The words only mean,

\* A mistaken translation. The words should be: *Begotten before any kind of creation*; and even this does not convey the full sense of the superlative, *πρωτότοκος*. (See Table Talk, p. 260, 2nd edit.—*Ed.*)

† But I shall scarcely obtain an answer to certain difficulties involved in this free and liberal interpretation: for example, that with the exception of a handful of rich men considered as little better than infidels, the Jews were as fully persuaded of these truths as Christians in general are



Sir, that a state of retribution after this life had been proved by the fact of Christ's resurrection—that is all!

Of the positive pole, on the other hand, language to the following purport is the usual exponent. "It is a mystery: and we are bound to believe the words without presuming to inquire into the meaning of them." That is, we believe in St. Paul's veracity; and that is enough. Yet St. Paul repeatedly presses on his hearers that thoughtful perusal of the Sacred Writings, and those habits of earnest though humble inquiry which, if the heart only have been previously regenerated, would lead them to a full assurance of understanding *eis enkyklosion*, (to an entire assent of the mind; to a spiritual intuition, or positive inward knowledge by experience) of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in which (*nempe, μυστηρίῳ*) are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Col. ii. 2, 3.

To expose the inconsistency of both these extremes, and by inference to recommend that state of mind, which looks forward to the fellowship of the mystery of the faith as a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God, the eyes of the

at the present day. Moreover that this inspired teacher had himself declared that if the Jews did not believe on the evidence of Moses and the Prophets, neither would they though a man should rise from the dead.

understanding *being enlightened* (Eph. i. 17, 18,)—this formed my general purpose. Long has it been at my heart! I consider it as the contradicting principle of Christianity that in it alone *πᾶς πλοῦτος τῆς πληροφορίας τῆς συνέσεως* (the understanding in its utmost power and opulence) culminates in faith, as in its crown of glory, at once its light and its remuneration. On this most important point I attempted long ago to preclude, if possible, all misconception and misinterpretation of my opinions. Alas! in this time of distress and embarrassment the sentiments have a more especial interest, a more immediate application, than when they were first written. If (I observed)\* it be a truth attested alike by common feeling and common sense, that the greater part of human misery depends directly on human vices, and the remainder indirectly, by what means can we act on men, so as to remove or preclude their vices and purify their principles of moral election? The question is not by what means each man is to alter his own character;—in order to this, all the means prescribed, and all the aidances given by religion may be necessary for him. Vain of themselves may be—

The sayings of the wise  
In ancient and in modern books inroll'd  
.....

\* The Friend, I. p. 134, 3rd edit.—*Ed.*

Unless he feel within  
Some source of consolation from above,  
Secret refreshings, that repair his strength,  
And fainting spirits uphold.

SAMSON AGONISTES.

This is not the question. Virtue would not be virtue could it be given by one fellow creature to another. To make use of all the means and appliances in our power to the actual attainment of rectitude, is the abstract of the duty which we owe to ourselves: to supply those means as far as we can, comprises our duty to others. The question then is, what are these means? Can they be any other than the communication of knowledge and the removal of those evils and impediments which prevent its reception? It may not be in our power to combine both, but it is in the power of every man to contribute to the former, who is sufficiently informed to feel that it is his duty. If it be said, that we should endeavour not so much to remove ignorance, as to make the ignorant religious: religion, herself, through her sacred oracles answers for me, that all effective faith pre-supposes knowledge and individual conviction. If the mere acquiescence in truth, uncomprehended and unfathomed, were sufficient, few indeed would be the vicious and the miserable, in this country at least where speculative infidelity is, Heaven be praised!

confined to a small number. Like bodily deformity, there is one instance here and another there; but three in one place are already an undue proportion. It is highly worthy of observation that the inspired Writings received by Christians are distinguishable from all other books pretending to inspiration, from the scriptures of the Bramins, and even from the Koran, in their strong and frequent recommendations of truth. I do not here mean veracity, which cannot but be enforced in every code which appeals to the religious principle of man; but knowledge. This is not only extolled as the crown and honour of a man, but to seek after it is again and again commanded us as one of our most sacred duties. Yea, the very perfection and final bliss of the glorified spirit is represented by the Apostle as a plain aspect or intuitive beholding of truth in its eternal and immutable source. Not that knowledge can of itself do all. The light of religion is not that of the moon, light without heat; but neither is its warmth that of the stove, warmth without light. Religion is the sun whose warmth indeed swells, and stirs, and actuates the life of nature, but who at the same time beholds all the growth of life with a master-eye, makes all objects glorious on which he looks, and by that glory visible to others.

*For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father*

*of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he would grant you according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth all knowledge, that ye might be filled with the fulness of God.* (Eph. iii. 14—19.) For to know God is (by a vital and spiritual act in which to know and to possess are one and indivisible)—to know God, I say, is—to acknowledge him as the infinite clearness in the incomprehensible fulness, and fulness incomprehensible with infinite clearness.

This then comprises my first purpose, which is in a twofold sense general: for in the substance, if not in the form, it belongs to all my countrymen and fellow-Christians without distinction of class, while for its object it embraces the whole of the inspired Scriptures from the recorded first day of heaven and earth, ere the light was yet gathered into celestial lamps or reflected from their revolving mirrors, to the predicted Sabbath of the new creation, when heaven and earth shall have become one city with neither *sun nor moon to shine in it*: for the glory of God shall lighten it

and the Lamb be the light thereof. My second purpose is after the same manner in a two-fold sense specific: for as this Sermon is nominally addressed to, so was it for the greater part exclusively intended for, the perusal of the learned: and its object likewise is to urge men so qualified to apply their powers and attainments to an especial study of the Old Testament as teaching the elements of political science.

It is asked, in what sense I use these words? I answer: in the same sense as the terms are employed when we refer to Euclid for the elements of the science of geometry, only with one difference arising from the diversity of the subject. With one difference only; but that one how momentous! All other sciences are confined to abstractions, unless when the term science is used in an improper and flattering sense.—Thus we may speak without boast of natural history; but we have not yet attained to a science of nature. The Bible alone contains a science of realities: and therefore each of its elements is at the same time a living germ, in which the present involves the future, and in the finite the infinite exists potentially. That hidden mystery in every the minutest form of existence, which contemplated under the relations of time presents itself to the understanding retrospectively, as an infinite ascent of causes, and

prospectively as an interminable progression of effects ;—that which contemplated in space is beholden intuitively as a law of action and re-action, continuous and extending beyond all bound ;—this same mystery freed from the *phænomena* of time and space, and seen in the depth of real being, reveals itself to the pure reason as the actual immanence or in-being\* of all in each. Are we struck with admiration at beholding the cope of heaven imaged in a dew-drop? The least of the *animalcula* to which that drop would be an ocean contains in itself an infinite problem of which God omni-present is the only solution. The slave of custom is roused by the rare and the accidental alone ; but the axioms of the unthinking are to the philosopher the deepest problems as being the nearest to the mysterious root and partaking at once of its darkness and its pregnancy.

Oh what a mine of undiscovered treasures, what a new world of power and truth would the Bible promise to our future meditation, if in some gracious moment one solitary text of all its inspired contents should but dawn upon us in the pure untroubled brightness of an idea, that most glorious birth of the God-like within us, which even as the

\* In-being is the word chosen by Bishop Sherlock to express this sense. See his Tract on the Athanasian Creed, 1827.

light, its material symbol, reflects itself from a thousand surfaces, and flies homeward to its Parent Mind enriched with a thousand forms, itself above form and still remaining in its own simplicity and identity! Oh for a flash of that same light, in which the first position of geometric science that ever loosed itself from the generalisations of a groping and insecure experience, for the first time revealed itself to a human intellect in all its evidence and all its fruitfulness, transparence without *vacuum*, and plenitude without opacity! Oh that a single gleam of our own inward experience would make comprehensible to us the rapturous Eureka, and the grateful hecatomb, of the philosopher of Samos;\*—or that vision which from the contemplation of an arithmetical harmony rose to the eye of Kepler, presenting the planetary world, and all its orbits in the divine order of their ranks and distances;—or which, in the falling of an apple, revealed to the ethereal intuition of our own

\* Pythagoras, who is said to have offered a hecatomb to the Muses (not of oxen, it may be surmised, but of small images) on discovering the property of right-angled triangles, demonstrated in the forty-seventh proposition of the first book of Euclid.—Hoc theoremate invento hecatombum Pythagoram sacrificasse Musis, refert Apollodorus, Plutarchus bovem, Porphyrius bovem ex farinâ confectum, quod cruenta sacrificia offerre non soleret. Brucker. Hist. Crit. Phil., tom. i. page 1061. The "rapturous Eureka" is commonly attributed to Archimedes.—D.C.



Newton the constructive principle of the material universe. The promises which I have ventured to hold forth concerning the hidden treasures of the Law and the Prophets will neither be condemned as paradox or as exaggeration by the mind that has learned to understand the possibility, that the reduction of the sands of the sea to number should be found a less stupendous problem by Archimedes than the simple conception of the Parmenidean ONE. What however is achievable by the human understanding without this light, may be comprised in the epithet, *κενόσπουδοι*: and a melancholy comment on that phrase would the history of human cabinets and legislators for the last thirty years furnish! The excellent Barrow, the last of the disciples of Plato and Archimedes among our modern mathematicians, shall give the description and state the value: and in his words I shall conclude.

*“Aliud agere, to be impertinently busy, doing that which conduceth to no good purpose, is in some respect worse than to do nothing. Of such industry we may understand that of the Preacher, The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them.”*

## APPENDIX.



## APPENDIX,

CONTAINING COMMENTS AND ESSAYS.

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(A.)

IN this use of the word "sufficiency," I pre-suppose on the part of the reader or hearer an humble and docile state of mind, and above all the practice of prayer, as the necessary condition of such a state, and the best if not the only means of becoming sincere to our own hearts. Christianity is especially differenced from all other religions by being grounded on facts which all men alike have the same means of ascertaining with equal facility, and which no man can ascertain for another. Each person must be herein querist and respondent to himself; Am I sick, and therefore need a physician?—Am I in spiritual slavery, and therefore need a ransom?—Have I given a pledge, which must be redeemed, and which I cannot redeem by my own resources?—Am I at one with God, and is my will concentric with that holy power, which is at once the constitutive will and the supreme reason of the universe?—If not, must I not be

mad if I do not seek, and miserable if I do not discover and embrace, the means of atonement? \* To collect, to weigh, and to appreciate historical proofs and presumptions is not equally within the means and opportunities of every man. The testimony of books of history is one of the strong and stately pillars of the Church of Christ; but it is not the foundation, nor can it without loss of essential faith be mistaken or substituted for the foundation. There is a sect, which in its scornful pride of antipathy to mysteries (that is, to all those doctrines of the pure and intuitive reason, which transcend the understanding, and can never be contemplated by it, but through a false and falsifying perspective) affects to condemn all inward and preliminary experience as enthusiastic delusion or fanatical contagion. Historic evidence, on the other hand, these men treat, as the Jews of old treated the brazen serpent, which was the relic and evidence of the miracles worked by Moses in the wilderness. They turned it into an idol: and therefore Hezekiah (*who clave to the Lord, and did right in the sight of the Lord, so that after him was none like him, among all the kings of Judah,*

\* This is a mistaken etymology, and consequently a dull, though unintentional, pun. Our *atone* is, doubtless, of the same stock with the Teutonic *aussöhnen*, *versöhnen*, the Anglo-Saxon taking the *t* for the *s*.

*nor any that were before him) not only removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves; but likewise brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made: for the children of Israel did burn incense to it. (2 Kings, xviii.)*

To preclude an error so pernicious, I request that to the wilful neglect of those outward ministrations of the word which all Englishmen have the privilege of attending, the reader will add the setting at nought likewise of those inward means of grace, without which the language of the Scriptures, in the most faithful translation and in the purest and plainest English, must nevertheless continue to be a dead language,—a sun-dial by moonlight.

(B.)

Reason and Religion differ only as a two-fold application of the same power. But if we are obliged to distinguish, we must ideally separate. In this sense I affirm that reason is the knowledge of the laws of the whole considered as one: and as such it is contradistinguished from the understanding, which concerns itself exclusively with the quantities, qualities, and relations of particulars in time and space. The understanding, therefore, is the science of *phenomena*, and of their subsumption under distinct kinds and sorts, (*genera* and *species*).

Its functions supply the rules and constitute the possibility of experience; but remain mere logical forms, except as far as materials are given by the senses or sensations. The reason, on the other hand, is the science of the universal, having the ideas of oneness and allness as its two elements or primary factors. In the language of the old schools,

Unity + Omneity = Totality.

The reason first manifests itself in man by the tendency to the comprehension of all as one. We can neither rest in an infinite that is not at the same time a whole, nor in a whole that is not infinite. Hence the natural man is always in a state either of resistance or of captivity to the understanding and the fancy, which cannot represent totality without limit: and he either loses the one in the striving after the infinite, that is, atheism with or without polytheism, or he loses the infinite in the striving after the one, and then sinks into anthropomorphic monotheism.

The rational instinct, therefore, taken abstractedly and unbalanced, did, in itself, (*ye shall be as gods*, Gen. iii. 5.) and in its consequences, (the lusts of the flesh, the eye, and the understanding, as in v. 5,) form the original temptation, through which man fell: and in all ages has continued to originate the same, even from Adam, in whom we

all fell, to the atheists who deified the human reason in the person of a harlot during the earlier period of the French Revolution.

To this tendency, therefore, religion, as the consideration of the particular and individual, (in which respect it takes up and identifies with itself the excellence of the understanding) but of the individual, as it exists and has its being in the universal (in which respect it is one with the pure reason,)—to this tendency, I say, religion assigns the due limits, and is the echo of the *voice of the Lord God walking in the garden*. Hence in all the ages and countries of civilisation religion has been the parent and fosterer of the fine arts, as of poetry, music, painting, and the like, the common essence of which consists in a similar union of the universal and the individual. In this union, moreover, is contained the true sense of the ideal. Under the old law the altar, the curtains, the priestly vestments, and whatever else was to represent the beauty of holiness, had an ideal character: and the Temple itself was a master-piece of ideal beauty.

There exists in the human being, at least in man fully developed, no mean symbol of tri-unity in reason, religion, and the will. For each of the three, though a distinct agency, implies and demands the other two, and loses its own nature at the moment that from distinction it passes into



division or separation. The perfect frame of a man is the perfect frame of a state: and in the light of this idea we must read Plato's Republic.\*

The comprehension, impartiality, and far-sightedness of reason (the legislative of our nature), taken singly and exclusively, becomes mere visionariness in intellect, and indolence or hard-heartedness in morals. It is the science of cosmopolitism without country, of philanthropy without neighbourliness or consanguinity, in short, of all the impostures of that philosophy of the French Revolution, which would sacrifice each to the shadowy idol of all. For Jacobinism is *monstrum hybridum*, made up in part of despotism, or the lust of rule grounded in selfishness; and in part of abstract reason misapplied to objects that belong entirely to experience and the understanding. Its instincts and mode of action are in strict correspondence with its origin. In all places, Jacobinism betrays its mixed parentage and nature by applying to the brute passions and physical force of the multitude (that is, to man as a mere animal,) in order to build up government and the frame of society on natural rights instead of social privileges, on the universals of abstract reason instead of positive institutions, the lights of

\* If I judge rightly, this celebrated work is to "The History of the Town of Man-soul," what Plato was to John Bunyan.

specific experience, and the modifications of existing circumstances. Right in its most proper sense is the creature of law and statute, and only in the technical language of the courts has it any substantial and independent sense. In morals, right is a word without meaning except as the correlative of duty.

From all this it follows, that reason as the science of all as a whole must be interpenetrated by a power, that represents the concentration of all in each—a power that acts by a contraction of universal truths into individual duties, such contraction being the only form in which those truths can attain life and reality. Now this is religion, which is the executive of our nature, and on this account the name of highest dignity, and the symbol of sovereignty. To the same purport I have elsewhere defined religion as philosophy evolved from idea into act and fact by the superinduction of the extrinsic conditions of reality.

Yet even religion itself, if ever in its too exclusive devotion to the specific and individual it neglects to interpose the contemplation of the universal, changes its being into superstition, and becoming more and more earthly and servile, as more and more estranged from the one in all, goes wandering at length with its pack of amulets, bead-rolls, periapts, fetishes, and the like pedlary, on

pilgrimages to Loretto, Mecca, or the temple of Jaggernaut, arm in arm with sensuality on one side and self-torture on the other, followed by a motley group of friars, pardoners, faquirs, gamesters, flagellants, mountebanks, and harlots.

But neither can reason or religion exist or co-exist as reason and religion, except as far as they are actuated by the will (the Platonic *θυμὸς*,) which is the sustaining, coercive and ministerial power, the functions of which in the individual correspond to the officers of war and police in the ideal Republic of Plato. In its state of immanence or indwelling in reason and religion, the will appears indifferently as wisdom or as love: two names of the same power, the former more intelligential, the latter more spiritual, the former more frequent in the Old, the latter in the New, Testament. But in its utmost abstraction and consequent state of reprobation, the will becomes Satanic pride and rebellious self-idolatry in the relations of the spirit to itself, and remorseless despotism relatively to others; the more hopeless as the more obdurate by its subjugation of sensual impulses, by its superiority to toil and pain and pleasure; in short, by the fearful resolve to find in itself alone the one absolute motive of action, under which all other motives from within and from without must be either subordinated or crushed.

This is the character which Milton has so philosophically as well as sublimely embodied in the Satan of his *Paradise Lost*. Alas! too often has it been embodied in real life. Too often has it given a dark and savage grandeur to the historic page. And wherever it has appeared, under whatever circumstances of time and country, the same ingredients have gone to its composition; and it has been identified by the same attributes. Hope in which there is no cheerfulness; steadfastness within and immovable resolve, with outward restlessness and whirling activity; violence with guile; temerity with cunning; and, as the result of all, interminableness of object with perfect indifference of means; these are the qualities that have constituted the commanding genius; these are the marks, that have characterised the masters of mischief, the liberticides, and mighty hunters of mankind, from Nimrod to Buonaparte. And from inattention to the possibility of such a character as well as from ignorance of its elements, even men of honest intentions too frequently become fascinated. Nay, whole nations have been so far duped by this want of insight and reflection as to regard with palliative admiration, instead of wonder and abhorrence, the Molochs of human nature, who are indebted for the larger portion of their meteoric success to their total want of principle, and who

surpass the generality of their fellow creatures in one act of courage only, that of daring to say with their whole heart, "Evil, be thou my good!"—All system so far is power; and a systematic criminal, self-consistent and entire in wickedness, who entrenches villany within villany, and barricadoes crime by crime, has removed a world of obstacles by the mere decision, that he will have no obstacles, but those of force and brute matter.

I have only to add a few sentences, in completion of this comment, on the conscience\* and on the understanding. The conscience is neither reason, religion, or will, but an experience *sui generis* of the coincidence of the human will with reason and religion. It might, perhaps, be called a spiritual sensation; but that there lurks a contradiction in the terms, and that it is often deceptive to give a common or generic name to that, which being unique, can have no fair analogy. In strictness, therefore, the conscience is neither a sensation nor a sense; but a testifying state, best described in the words of Scripture, as *the peace of God that passeth all understanding*.

\* I have this morning read with high delight an admirable representation of what men in general think, and what ought to be thought, concerning the conscience in the translation of Swedenborg's Universal Theology of the New Church, II. pp. 361—370.

6 January, 1821.

Of the latter faculty, namely, of the understanding, considered in and of itself the Peripatetic aphorism, *nihil in intellectu quod non prius in sensu*, is strictly true, as well as the legal maxim, *de rebus non apparentibus et non existentibus eadem est ratio*. The eye is not more inappropriate to sound, than the mere understanding to the modes and laws of spiritual existence. In this sense I have used the term; and in this sense I assert that the understanding or experiential faculty, unirradiated by the reason and the spirit, has no appropriate object but the material world in relation to our worldly interests. The far-sighted prudence of man, and the more narrow but at the same time far less fallible cunning of the fox, are both no other than a nobler substitute for salt, in order that the hog may not putrefy before its destined hour.

It must not, however, be overlooked that this insulation of the understanding is our own act and deed. The man of healthful and undivided intellect uses his understanding\* in this state of

\* Perhaps the safer use of the term, understanding, for general purposes, is, to take it as the mind, or rather as the man himself considered as a concipient as well as percipient being, and reason as a power supervening. The want of a clear notion respecting the nature of reason may be traced to the difficulty of combining the notion of an organ of sense, or a new sense, with the notion of the appropriate and peculiar objects of that sense, so that the idea evolved from

abstraction only as a tool or organ; even as the arithmetician uses numbers, that is, as the means not the end of knowledge. Our Shakspeare in agreement both with truth and the philosophy of his age names it "discourse of reason," as an instrumental faculty belonging to reason: and

this *synthesis* shall be the identity of both. By reason we know that God is: but God is himself the Supreme Reason. And this is the proper difference between all spiritual faculties and the bodily senses;—the organs of spiritual apprehension having objects consubstantial with themselves (*δμοούσια*), or being themselves their own objects, that is, self-contemplative.

Reason may or rather must be used in two different yet correlative senses, which are nevertheless in some measure reunited by a third. In its highest sense, and which is the ground and source of the rest, reason is being, the Supreme Being contemplated objectively, and in abstraction from the personality. The Word or Logos is life, and communicates life; is light and communicates light. Now this light contemplated *in abstracto* is reason. Again as constituents of reason we necessarily contemplate unity and distinctity. Now the latter as the polar opposite to the former implies plurality: therefore I use the plural, distinctities, and say, that the distinctities considered apart from the unity are the ideas, and reason is the ground and source of ideas. This is the first and absolute sense.

The second sense comes when we speak of ourselves as possessing reason; and this we can no otherwise define than as the capability with which God had endowed man of beholding, or being conscious of, the divine light. But this very capability is itself that light, not as the divine light, but as the life or indwelling of the living Word, which is our light; that is, a life whereby we are capable of the

Milton opposes the discursive to the intuitive, as the lower to the higher,

Differing but in degree, in kind the same.

Of the discursive understanding, which forms for itself general notions and terms of classification for the purpose of comparing and arranging *phænomena*, the characteristic is clearness without depth. It contemplates the unity of things in their limits only, and is consequently a knowledge of superficies without substance. So much so, indeed, that it entangles itself in contradictions in the very effort of comprehending the idea of substance. The completing power which unites clearness with depth, the plenitude of the sense with the comprehensibility of the understanding, is the imagination, impregnated with which the understanding itself becomes intuitive, and a living power. The reason, (not the abstract reason, not the reason as the mere organ of science, or as the faculty of scientific principles and schemes *à priori*; but reason) as the integral spirit of the regenerated

light, and by which the light is present to us, as a being which we may call ours, but which I cannot call mine: for it is the life that we individualise, while the light, as its correlative opposite, remains universal.

Most pregnant is the doctrine of opposite correlatives as applied to Deity, but only as manifested in man, not to the Godhead absolutely. 1827.



man, reason substantiated and vital, *one only*, yet manifold, overseeing all, and going through all understanding; *the breath of the power of God, and a pure influence from the glory of the Almighty*; which remaining in itself regenerateth all other powers, and in all ages entering into holy souls maketh them friends of God and prophets; (Wisdom of Solomon, c. vii.) this reason without being either the sense, the understanding, or the imagination, contains all three within itself, even as the mind contains its thoughts, and is present in and through them all; or as the expression pervades the different features of an intelligent countenance. Each individual must bear witness of it to his own mind, even as he describes life and light: and with the silence of light it describes itself, and dwells in us only as far as we dwell in it. It cannot, in strict language, be called a faculty, much less a personal property, of any human mind. He, with whom it is present, can as little appropriate it, whether totally or by partition, as he can claim ownership in the breathing air, or make an inclosure in the cope of heaven.

The object of the preceding discourse was to recommend the Bible, as the end and centre of our reading and meditation. I can truly affirm of myself, that my studies have been profitable and availing to me only so far as I have endeavoured

to use all my other knowledge as a glass enabling me to receive more light in a wider field of vision from the word of God. If you have accompanied me thus far, thoughtful reader, let it not weary you if I digress for a few moments to another book, likewise a revelation of God—the great book of his servant Nature. That in its obvious sense and literal interpretation it declares the being and attributes of the Almighty Father, none but the fool in heart has ever dared gainsay. But it has been the music of gentle and pious minds in all ages, it is the poetry of all human nature, to read it likewise in a figurative sense, and to find therein correspondencies and symbols of the spiritual world.

I have at this moment before me, in the flowery meadow, on which my eye is now reposing, one of its most soothing chapters, in which there is no lamenting word, no one character of guilt or anguish. For never can I look and meditate on the vegetable creation without a feeling similar to that with which we gaze at a beautiful infant that has fed itself asleep at its mother's bosom, and smiles in its strange dream of obscure yet happy sensations. The same tender and genial pleasure takes possession of me, and this pleasure is checked and drawn inward by the like aching melancholy, by the same whispered remonstrance, and made

restless by a similar impulse of aspiration. It seems as if the soul said to herself: From this state hast thou fallen! Such shouldst thou still become, thyself all permeable to a holier power! thyself at once hidden and glorified by its own transparency, as the accidental and dividuous in this quiet and harmonious object is subjected to the life and light of nature; to that life and light of nature, I say, which shines in every plant and flower, even as the transmitted power, love and wisdom of God over all fills, and shines through, nature! But what the plant is by an act not its own and unconsciously—that must thou unmake thyself to become—must by prayer and by a watchful and unresisting spirit, join at least with the preventive and assisting grace to make thyself, in that light of conscience which inflameth not, and with that knowledge which puffeth not up!

But further, and with particular reference to that undivided reason, neither merely speculative or merely practical, but both in one, which I have in this annotation endeavoured to contra-distinguish from the understanding, I seem to myself to behold in the quiet objects, on which I am gazing, more than an arbitrary illustration, more than a mere *simile*, the work of my own fancy. I feel an awe, as if there were before my eyes the same power as that of the reason—the same power in a

lower dignity, and therefore a symbol established in the truth of things. I feel it alike, whether I contemplate a single tree or flower, or meditate on vegetation throughout the world, as one of the great organs of the life of nature. Lo!\*—with the rising sun it commences its outward life and enters into open communion with all the elements, at once assimilating them to itself and to each other. At the same moment it strikes its roots and unfolds its leaves, absorbs and respire, steams forth its cooling vapour and finer fragrance, and breathes a repairing spirit, at once the food and tone of the atmosphere, into the atmosphere that feeds it. Lo!—at the touch of light how it returns an air akin to light, and yet with the same pulse effectuates its own secret growth, still contracting to fix what expanding it had refined. Lo!—how upholding the ceaseless plastic motion of the parts in the profoundest rest of the whole it becomes the visible *organismus* of the entire silent or elementary

\* The remainder of this paragraph might properly form the conclusion of a disquisition on the spirit, as suggested by meditative observation of natural objects, and of our own thoughts and impulses without reference to any theological dogma, or any religious obligation to receive it as a revealed truth, but traced to the law of the dependence of the particular on the universal, the first being the organ of the second, as the lungs in relation to the atmosphere, the eye to light, crystal to fluid, figure to space, and the like. 1822.

life of nature and, therefore, in incorporating the one extreme becomes the symbol of the other ; the natural symbol of that higher life of reason, in which the whole series (known to us in our present state of being) is perfected, in which, therefore, all the subordinate gradations recur, and are re-ordained *in more abundant honour*. We had seen each in its own cast, and we now recognise them all as co-existing in the unity of a higher form, the crown and completion of the earthly, and the mediator of a new and heavenly series.\* Thus

\* It may be shown that the *plus* or universal, which man as the *minus* or individual finds his correlative pole, can only be God. I. This may be proved, exhaustively, that all lower universals are already attached to lower particulars. II. It may be proved by the necessity of harmonic correspondence. The principle of personal individuality being the transcendent—(that is, the highest *species* of *genus* X, in which X rises, *moritur*, at *dum moritur resurgit*, into the higher *genus* Y)—the personal principle, I say, being the transcendent of all particulars, requires for its correspondent opposite the transcendent of all universals : and this is God. The doctrine of the spirit thus generally conceived, and without being matured into any more distinct conceptions by revealed Scripture, is the ground of theopathy, religious feeling, or devoutness : while the reason,—as contradistinguished from the understanding by logical processes, without reference to revelation or to reason *sensu eminenti*, as the self-subsistent Reason or *Logos*, and merely considered as the endowment of the human will and mind, having two definitions accordingly as it is exercised practically or intellectually,—is the ground of theology, or religious belief. Both are good in themselves as far as they go, and

finally, the vegetable creation, in the simplicity and uniformity of its internal structure symbolising the unity of nature, while it represents the omniformity of her delegated functions in its external variety and manifoldness, becomes the record and chronicle of her ministerial acts, and inchoates the vast unfolded volume of the earth with the hieroglyphics of her history.

O!—if as the plant to the orient beam, we would but open out our minds to that holier light, which *“being compared with light is found before it, more beautiful than the sun, and above all the order of stars,”* (Wisdom of Solomon, vii. 29,)—ungenial, alien, and adverse to our very nature would appear the boastful wisdom which, beginning in France, gradually tampered with the taste and literature of all the most civilised nations of Christendom,

productive—the former—of a sensibility to the beautiful in art and nature, of imaginativeness and moral enthusiasm;—the latter—of insight, comprehension, and a philosophic mind. They are good in themselves, and the preconditions of the better; and therefore these disquisitions would form an appropriate conclusion to *The Aids to Reflection*. For as many as are wanting either in leisure or inclination, or belief of their own competency to go further—from the miscellaneous to the systematic—that volume is a whole, and for them the whole work. While for others these disquisitions form the drawbridge, the connecting link, between the disciplinary and preparatory rules and exercises of reflection, and the system of faith and philosophy of S. T. C. 1827.

seducing the understanding from its natural allegiance, and therewith from all its own lawful claims, titles, and privileges. It was placed as a ward of honour in the courts of faith and reason; but it chose to dwell alone, and became a harlot by the way-side. The commercial spirit, and the ascendancy of the experimental philosophy which took place at the close of the seventeenth century, though both good and beneficial in their own kinds, combined to foster its corruption. Flattered and dazzled by the real or supposed discoveries which it had made, the more the understanding was enriched, the more did it become debased; till science itself put on a selfish and sensual character, and immediate utility, in exclusive reference to the gratification of the wants and appetites of the animal, the vanities and caprices of the social, and the ambition of the political, man was imposed as the test of all intellectual powers and pursuits. Worth was degraded into a lazy synonyme of value; and value was exclusively attached to the interest of the senses. But though the growing alienation and self-sufficiency of the understanding was perceptible at an earlier period, yet it seems to have been about the middle of the last century, under the influence of Voltaire, D'Alembert, Diderot, say generally of the so-called Encyclopedists, and alas!—of their crowned proselytes and

disciples, Frederick, Joseph, and Catherine,—that the human understanding, and this too in its narrowest form, was tempted to throw off all show of reverence to the spiritual and even to the moral powers and impulses of the soul; and usurping the name of reason openly joined the banners of Antichrist, at once the pander and the prostitute of sensuality, and whether in the cabinet, laboratory, the dissecting room, or the brothel, alike busy in the schemes of vice and irreligion. Well and truly might it, thus personified in our fancy, have been addressed in the words of the evangelical Prophet, which I have once before quoted. *Thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee—and thou hast said in thy heart, I am, and there is none beside me.* (Isaiah, xlvii. 10.)

Prurient, bustling, and revolutionary, this French wisdom has never more than grazed the surfaces of knowledge. As political economy, in its zeal for the increase of food it habitually overlooked the qualities and even the sensations of those that were to feed on it. As ethical philosophy, it recognised no duties which it could not reduce into debtor and creditor accounts on the ledgers of self-love, where no coin was sterling which could not be rendered into agreeable sensations. And even in its height of self-complacency as chemical art, greatly am I deceived if it has not from the very beginning



mistaken the products of destruction, *cadavera rerum*, for the elements of composition : and most assuredly it has dearly purchased a few brilliant inventions at the loss of all communion with life and the spirit of nature. As the process, such the result ;—a heartless frivolity alternating with a sentimentality as heartless ; an ignorant contempt of antiquity ; a neglect of moral self-discipline ; a deadening of the religious sense, even in the less reflecting forms of natural piety ; a scornful reprobation of all consolations and secret refreshings from above,—and as the *caput mortuum* of human nature evaporated, a French nature of rapacity, levity, ferocity, and presumption.

Man of understanding, canst thou command the stone to lie, canst thou bid the flower bloom, where thou hast placed it in thy classification ?—Canst thou persuade the living or the inanimate to stand separate even as thou hast separated them ?—And do not far rather all things spread out before thee in glad confusion and heedless intermixture, even as a lightsome chaos on which the Spirit of God is moving ?—Do not all press and swell under one attraction, and live together in promiscuous harmony, each joyous in its own kind, and in the immediate neighbourhood of myriad others that in the system of thy understanding are distant as the poles ?—If to mint and to remember names delight

thee, still arrange and classify and pore and pull to pieces, and peep into death to look for life, as monkies put their hands behind a looking-glass! Yet consider in the first sabbath which thou imposest on the busy discursion of thought, that all this is at best little more than a technical memory: that like can only be known by like: that as truth is the correlative of being, so is the act of being the great organ of truth: that in natural no less than in moral science, *quantum sumus, scimus*.

That which we find in ourselves is (*gradu mutato*) the substance and the life of all our knowledge. Without this latent presence of the 'I am,' all modes of existence in the external world would flit before us as colored shadows, with no greater depth, root, or fixture, than the image of a rock hath in a gliding stream or the rainbow on a fast-sailing rain-storm. The human mind is the compass, in which the laws and actuations of all outward essences are revealed as the dips and declinations. (The application of geometry to the forces and movements of the material world is both proof and instance.) The fact, therefore, that the mind of man in its own primary and constituent forms represents the laws of nature, is a mystery which of itself should suffice to make us religious: for it is a problem of which God is the only

solution, God, the one before all, and of all, and through all!—True natural philosophy is comprised in the study of the science and language of symbols. The power delegated to nature is all in every part: and by a symbol I mean, not a metaphor or allegory or any other figure of speech or form of fancy, but an actual and essential part of that, the whole of which it represents. Thus our Lord speaks symbolically when he says that *the eye is the light of the body*. The genuine naturalist is dramatic poet in his own line: and such as our myriad-minded Shakspeare is, compared with the Racines and Metastasios, such and by a similar process of self-transformation would the man be, compared with the doctors of the mechanic school, who should construct his physiology on the heaven-descended, Know Thyself.

Even *the visions of the night* speak to us of powers within us that are not dreamt of in their day-dream of philosophy. The dreams, which we most often remember, are produced by the nascent sensations and inward *motiunculae* (the fluxions) of the waking state. Hence, too, they are more capable of being remembered, because passing more gradually into our waking thoughts they are more likely to associate with our first perceptions after sleep. Accordingly, when the nervous system is approaching to the waking state, a sort of under-

consciousness blends with our dreams, that in all we imagine as seen or heard our own self is the ventriloquist, and moves the slides in the magic-lantern. We dream about things.

But there are few persons of tender feelings and reflecting habits, who have not, more or less often in the course of their lives, experienced dreams of a very different kind, and during the profoundest sleep that is compatible with after-recollection,—states, of which it would scarcely be too bold to say that we dream the things themselves; so exact, minute, and vivid beyond all power of ordinary memory is the portraiture, so marvellously perfect is our brief *metempsychosis* into the very being, as it were, of the person who seems to address us. The dullest wight is at times a Shakspeare in his dreams. Not only may we expect that men of strong religious feelings, but little religious knowledge, will occasionally be tempted to regard such occurrences as supernatural visitations; but it ought not to surprise us, if such dreams should sometimes be confirmed by the event, as though they had actually possessed a character of divination. For who shall decide, how far a perfect reminiscence of past experiences, (of many perhaps that had escaped our reflex consciousness at the time)—who shall determine, to what extent this reproductive imagination, unsophisticated by the

will, and undistracted by intrusions from the senses, may or may not be concentered and sublimed into foresight and presentiment?—There would be nothing herein either to foster superstition on the one hand, or to justify contemptuous disbelief on the other. Incredulity is but credulity seen from behind, bowing and nodding assent to the habitual and the fashionable.

To the touch (or feeling) belongs the proximate; to the eye the distant. Now little as I might be disposed to believe, I should be still less inclined to ridicule, the conjecture that in the recesses of our nature, and undeveloped, there might exist an inner sense, (and therefore appertaining wholly to time,)—a sense hitherto without a name, which as a higher third combined and potentially included both the former. Thus gravitation combines and includes the powers of attraction and repulsion, which are the constituents of matter, as distinguished from body. And thus, not as a compound, but as a higher third, it realises matter (of itself *ens fluxionale et præfluum*) and constitutes it body. Now suppose that this nameless inner sense stood to the relations of time as the power of gravitation to those of space? *A priori*, a presence to the future is not more mysterious or transcendant than a presence to the distant, than a power equally immediate to the most remote objects, as it is to

the central mass of its own body, toward which it seems, as it were, enchanting them : for instance, the gravity in the sun and moon to the spring tides of our ocean. The true reply to such an *hypothesis* would be, that as there is nothing to be said against its possibility, there is, likewise, nothing to be urged for its reality ; and that the facts may be rationally explained without it.

It has been asked why knowing myself to be the object of personal slander, (slander as unprovoked as it is groundless, unless acts of kindness are provocation,) I furnish this material for it by pleading in palliation of so chimerical a fancy. With that half-playful sadness, which at once sighs and smiles, I answered : why not for that very reason ?—namely, in order that my calumniator might have, if not a material, yet some basis for the poison-gas of his invention to combine with ?—But no,—pure falsehood is often for the time the most effective ; for how can a man confute what he can only contradict ?—Our opinions and principles cannot prove an *alibi*. Think only what your feelings would be if you heard a wretch deliberately perjure himself in support of an infamous accusation, so remote from all fact, so smooth and homogeneous in its untruth, such a round Robin of mere lies, that you knew not which to begin with ?—What could you do, but look round with

horror and astonishment, pleading silently to human nature itself,—and perhaps (as hath really been the case with me) forget both the slanderer and his slander in the anguish inflicted by the passiveness of your many professed friends, whose characters you had ever been as eager to clear from the least stain of reproach as if a coal of fire had been on your own skin?—But enough of this which would not have occurred to me at all, at this time, had it not been thus suggested.

The feeling, which in point of fact chiefly influenced me in the preceding half apology for the supposition of a divining power in the human mind, arose out of the conviction that an age or nation may become free from certain prejudices, beliefs, and superstitious practices in two ways. It may have really risen above them; or it may have fallen below them, and become too bad for their continuance. The rustic would have little reason to thank the philosopher who should give him true conceptions of ghosts, omens, dreams, and presentiments at the price of abandoning his faith in Providence and in the continued existence of his fellow-creatures after their death. The teeth of the old serpent sowed by the Cadmuses of French literature under Louis XV. produced a plenteous crop of such philosophers and truth-trumpeters in the reign of his ill-fated successor. They taught

many facts, historical, political, physiological, and ecclesiastical, diffusing their notions so widely that the very ladies and hair-dressers of Paris became fluent encyclopedists; and the sole price, which their scholars paid for these treasures of new light, was to believe Christianity an imposture, the Scriptures a forgery, the worship of God superstition, hell a fable, heaven a dream, our life without providence, and our death without hope. What can be conceived more natural than the result, that self-acknowledged beasts should first act, and next suffer themselves to be treated, as beasts.

Thank heaven!—notwithstanding the attempts of Thomas Payne and his compeers, it is not so bad with us. Open infidelity has ceased to be a means even of gratifying vanity: for the leaders of the gang themselves turned apostates to Satan, as soon as the number of their proselytes became so large that atheism ceased to give distinction. Nay, it became a mark of original thinking to defend the Creed and the Ten Commandments: so the strong minds veered round, and religion came again into fashion. But still I exceedingly doubt, whether the superannuation of sundry superstitious fancies be the result of any real diffusion of sound thinking in the nation at large. For instance, there is now no call for a *Picus Mirandula* to write seven books against astrology. It might seem, indeed, that a



single fact like that of the loss of Kempenfeldt and his crew, or the explosion of the ship *L'Orient*, would prove to the common sense of the most ignorant, that even if astrology could be true, the astrologers must be false: for if such a science were possible it could be a science only for gods. Yet Erasmus, the prince of sound common sense, is known to have disapproved of his friend's hardihood, and did not himself venture beyond scepticism: and the immortal Newton, to whom more than to any other human being Europe owes the purification of its general notions concerning the heavenly bodies, studied astrology with much earnestness and did not reject it till he had demonstrated the falsehood of all its pretended grounds and principles. The exit of two or three superstitions is no more a proof of the entry of good sense, than the strangling of a despot at Algiers or Constantinople is a symptom of freedom. If therefore not the mere disbelief, but the grounds of such disbelief must decide the question of our superior illumination, I confess that I could not from my own observations on the books and conversation of the age vote for the affirmative without much hesitation. As many errors are despised by men from ignorance as from knowledge. Whether that be not the case with regard to divination, is a query that rises in my mind (notwithstanding my

fullest conviction of the non-existence of such a power) as often as I read the names of the great statesmen and philosophers, which Cicero enumerates in the introductory paragraphs of his work *de Divinatione*.—*Socrates, omnesque Socratici, \* \* \* plurimisque locis gravis auctor Democritus, \* \* \* Cratippusque, familiaris noster, quem ego parem summis Peripateticis judico, \* \* \* præsentionem rerum futurarum comprobarunt.\** Of all the theistic philosophers, Xenophanes was the only one who wholly rejected it. *A Stoicis degeneravit Panætius, nec tamen ausus est negare vim esse divinandi, sed dubitare se dixit.†* Nor was this a mere outward assent to the opinions of the State. Many of them subjected the question to the most exquisite arguments, and supported the affirmative not merely by experience, but (especially the Stoics, who of all the sects most cultivated psychology) by a minute analysis of human nature and its faculties: while on the mind of Cicero himself (as on that of Plato with regard to a state of retribution after death) the universality of the faith in all times and countries appears to have made the deepest impression. *Gentem quidem nullam video, neque tam humanam atque doctam, neque tam immanem tamque barbaram, quæ non significari futura, et à quibusdam intelligi prædicique posse censeat.‡*

\* L. I. s. 2.—*Ed.*† *Ib.*—*Ed.*‡ L. I. s. 1.—*Ed.*

I fear that the decrease in our feelings of reverence towards mankind at large, and our increasing aversion to every opinion not grounded in some appeal to the senses, have a larger share in this our emancipation from the prejudices of Socrates and Cicero, than reflection, insight, or a fair collation of the facts and arguments. For myself, I would much rather see the English people at large believe somewhat too much than merely just enough, if the latter is to be produced, or must be accompanied, by a contempt or neglect of the faith and intellect of their forefathers. For not to say, what yet is most certain, that a people cannot believe just enough, and that there are errors which no wise man will treat with rudeness, while there is a probability that they may be the refraction of some great truth as yet below the horizon; it remains most worthy of our serious consideration, whether a fancied superiority to their ancestors' intellects must not be speedily followed in the popular mind by disrespect for their ancestors' institutions. Assuredly it is not easy to place any confidence in a form of Church or State, of the founders of which we have been taught to believe that their philosophy was jargon, and their feelings and notions rank superstition. Yet are we never to grow wiser?—Are we to be credulous by birth-right, and take ghosts, omens, visions, and witch-

craft, as an heir-loom?—God forbid. A distinction must be made, and such a one as shall be equally availing and profitable to men of all ranks. Is this practicable?—Yes!—it exists. It is found in the study of the Old and New Testament, if only it be combined with a spiritual partaking of the Redeemer's Blood, of which, mysterious as the symbol may be, the sacramental Wine is no mere or arbitrary *memento*. This is the only certain, and this is the universal, preventive of all debasing superstitions; this is the true Hæmony (*αἷμα*, blood, *οἶνος*, wine) which our Milton has beautifully allegorised in a passage strangely overlooked by all his commentators. Bear in mind, reader! the character of a militant Christian, and the results (in this life and in the next) of the Redemption by the Blood of Christ; and so peruse the passage:—

Amongst the rest a small unsightly root,  
 But of divine effect, he culled me out :  
 The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it,  
 But in another country, as he said,  
 Bore a bright golden flower, but not in this soil !  
 Unknown and like esteem'd, and the dull swain  
 Treads on it daily with his clouted shoon ;  
 And yet more med'cinal is it than that Moly  
 That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave.  
 He called it Hæmony and gave it me,  
 And bade me keep it as of sovran use  
 'Gainst all enchantments, mildew, blast, or damp,  
 Or ghastly furies' apparition. COMUS.

These lines might be employed as an amulet against delusions: for the man, who is indeed a Christian, will as little think of informing himself concerning the future by dreams or presentiments, as of looking for a distant object at broad noon-day with a lighted taper in his hand.

But whatever of good and intellectual our nature worketh in us, it is our appointed task to render gradually our own work. For all things that surround us, and all things that happen unto us, have (each doubtless its own providential purpose, but) all one common final cause: namely, the increase of consciousness in such wise that whatever part of the *terra incognita* of our nature the increased consciousness discovers, our will may conquer and bring into subjection to itself under the sovereignty of reason.

The leading differences between mechanic and vital philosophy may all be drawn from one point: namely, that the former demanding for every mode and act of existence real or possible visibility, knows only of distance and nearness, composition (or rather juxta-position) and decomposition, in short the relations of unproductive particles to each other; so that in every instance the result is the exact sum of the component quantities, as in arithmetical addition. This is the philosophy of death, and only of a dead nature can it hold good. In

life, much more in spirit, and in a living and spiritual philosophy, the two component counter-powers actually interpenetrate each other, and generate a higher third, including both the former, *ita tamen ut sit alia et major*.

To apply this to the subject of this present comment. The elements (the factors, as it were) of religion are reason and understanding. If the composition stopped in itself, an understanding thus rationalised would lead to the admission of the general doctrines of natural religion, the belief of a God, and of immortality; and probably to an acquiescence in the history and ethics of the Gospel. But still it would be a speculative faith, and in the nature of a theory; as if the main object of religion were to solve difficulties for the satisfaction of the intellect. Now this state of mind, which alas! is the state of too many among our self-entitled rational religionists, is a mere balance or compromise of the two powers, not that living and generative interpenetration of both which would give being to essential religion,—to the religion at the birth of which *we receive the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father; the Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.* (Rom. viii. 15, 16.) In religion there is no abstraction. To the unity and infinity of the Divine Nature, of which it is the partaker,

it adds the fulness, and to the fulness, the grace and the creative overflowing. That which intuitively it at once beholds and adores, praying always, and rejoicing always—that doth it tend to become. In all things and in each thing—for the Almighty Goodness doth not create generalities or abide in abstractions—in each, the meanest, object it bears witness to a mystery of infinite solution. Thus *beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, it is changed into the same image from glory to glory.* (2 Cor. iii. 18.) For as it is born and not made, so must it grow. As it is the image or symbol of its great object, by the organ of this similitude, as by an eye, it seeth that same image throughout the creation; and from the same cause sympathiseth with all creation in its groans to be redeemed. *For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in earnest expectation* (Rom. viii. 20—23) of a renewal of its forfeited power, the power, namely, of retiring into that image, which is its substantial form and true life, from the vanity of self, which then only is when for itself it hath ceased to be. Even so doth religion finitely express the unity of the infinite Spirit by being a total act of the soul. And even so doth it represent his fullness by its depth, by its substantiality, and by an all-pervading vital warmth which—relaxing the rigid, consolidating the dissolute, and giving

cohesion to that which is about to sink down and fall abroad, as into the dust and crumble of the grave—is a life within life, evermore organising the soul anew.

Nor doth it express the fulness only of the Spirit. It likewise represents his overflowing by its communicativeness, budding and blossoming forth in all earnestness of persuasion, and in all words of sound doctrine: while, like the citron in a genial soil and climate, it bears a golden fruitage of good-works at the same time, the example waxing in contact with the exhortation, as the ripe orange beside the opening orange-flower. Yea, even his creativeness doth it shadow out by its own powers of impregnation and production, (*being such a one as Paul the aged, and also a prisoner for Jesus Christ, who begat to a lively hope his son Onesimus in his bonds*) regenerating in and through the Spirit the slaves of corruption, and fugitives from a far greater and harder master than Philemon. The love of God, and therefore God himself who is love, religion strives to express by love, and measures its growth by the increase and activity of its love. For Christian love is the last and divinest birth, the harmony, unity, and god-like transfiguration of all the vital, intellectual, moral, and spiritual powers. Now it manifests itself as the sparkling and ebullient spring of well-doing in gifts and in



labours; and now as a silent fountain of patience and long-suffering, the fulness of which no hatred or persecution can exhaust or diminish; a more than conqueror in the persuasion, *that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate it from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus the Lord.* (Rom. viii. 38, 39.)

From God's love through his Son, crucified for us from the beginning of the world, religion begins: and in love towards God and the creatures of God it hath its end and completion. O, how heaven-like it is to sit among brethren at the feet of a minister who speaks under the influence of love and is heard under the same influence! For all abiding and spiritual knowledge, infused into a grateful and affectionate fellow Christian, is as the child of the mind that infuses it. The delight which he gives he receives; and in that bright and liberal hour the gladdened preacher can scarce gather the ripe produce of to-day without discovering and looking forward to the green fruits and embryos, the heritage and reversionary wealth of the days to come; till he bursts forth in prayer and thanksgiving—*The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers few. O gracious Lord of the harvest, send forth labourers into thy harvest! There*

*is no difference between the Jew and the Greek. Thou, Lord over all, art rich to all that call upon thee. But how shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent? And oh how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth glad tidings of good things, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto the captive soul, Thy God reigneth! God manifested in the flesh hath redeemed thee! O Lord of the harvest, send forth labourers into thy harvest.*

Join with me, reader! in the fervent prayer that we may seek within us what we can never find elsewhere, that we may find within us what no words can put there, that one only true religion, which elevateth knowing into being, which is at once the science of being, and the being and the life of all genuine science.

(C.)

Not without great hesitation should I express a suspicion concerning the genuineness of any the least important passage in the New Testament, unless I could adduce the most conclusive evidence from the earliest manuscripts and commentators, in support of its interpolation: well knowing that such

permission has already opened a door to the most fearful license. It is, indeed, in its consequences, no less than an assumed right of picking and chusing our religion out of the Scriptures. Most assuredly I would never hazard a suggestion of this kind in any instance in which the retention or the omission of the words could make the slightest difference with regard to fact, miracle, or precept. Still less would I start the question, where the *hypothesis* of their interpolation could be wrested to the discountenancing of any article of doctrine concerning which dissension existed: no, not though the doubt or disbelief of the doctrine had been confined to those, whose faith few but themselves would honour with the name of Christianity; however reluctant we might be, both from the courtesies of social life and the nobler charities of humility, to withhold from the persons themselves the title of Christians.

But as there is nothing in Matthew xii. 40, which would fall within this general rule, I dare permit myself to propose the query, whether there does not exist internal evidence of its being a gloss of some unlearned, though pious, Christian of the first century, which has slipt into the text? The following are my reasons. 1. It is at all events a comment on the words of our Saviour, and no part of his speech. 2. It interrupts the course and

breaks down the application of our Lord's argument, as addressed to men who from their unwillingness to sacrifice their vain traditions, gainful hypocrisy, and pride both of heart and of demeanour, demanded a miracle for the confirmation of moral truths that must have borne witness to their own divinity in the consciences of all who had not rendered themselves conscience-proof. 3. The text strictly taken is irreconcilable with the fact as it is afterwards related, and as it is universally accepted. I at least remember no calculation of time, according to which the interspace from Friday evening to the earliest dawn of Sunday morning, could be represented as three days and three nights. As three days our Saviour himself speaks of it (John ii. 19), and so it would be described in common language as well as according to the use of the Jews; but I can find no other part of Scripture which authorises the phrase of three nights. This gloss is not found either in the repetition of the circumstance by Matthew himself (xvi. 4), nor in Mark (viii. 12), nor in Luke (xii. 54). Mark's narration doth indeed most strikingly confirm my second reason, drawn from the purpose of our Saviour's argument: for the allusion to the prophet Jonas is omitted altogether, and the refusal therefore rests on the depravity of the applicants, as proved by the wantonness of the application itself. All signs

must have been useless to such men as long as the great sign of the times, the call to repentance, remained without effect. 4. The gloss corresponds with the known fondness of the earlier Jewish converts, and indeed of the Christians in general of the first century, to bring out in detail and into exact square every accommodation of the Old Testament, which they either found in the Gospels, or made for themselves. It is too notorious into what strange fancies (not always at safe distance from dangerous errors), the oldest uninspired writers of the Christian Church were seduced by this passion of transmuting without Scriptural authority incidents, names, and even mere sounds of the Hebrew Scriptures, into Evangelical types and correspondencies.

An additional reason may perhaps occur to those who alone would be qualified to appreciate its force: namely, to Biblical scholars familiar with the opinions and arguments of sundry doctors, Rabbinical as well as Christian, respecting the first and second chapter of Jonah.

(D.)

In all ages of the Christian Church, and in the later period of the Jewish (that is, as soon as from their acquaintance first with the Oriental, and afterwards with the Greek, philosophy the

precursory and preparative influences of the Gospel began to work), there have existed individuals (Laodiceans in spirit, minims in faith, and nominalists in philosophy) who mistake outlines for substance, and distinct images for clear conceptions; with whom therefore not to be a thing is the same as not to be at all. The contempt in which such persons hold the works and doctrines of all theologians before Grotius, and of all philosophers before Locke and Hartley (at least before Bacon and Hobbes) is not accidental, nor yet altogether owing to that epidemic of a proud ignorance occasioned by a diffused sciolism, which gave a sickly and hectic showiness to the latter half of the last century. It is a real instinct of self-defence acting offensively by anticipation. For the authority of all the greatest names of antiquity is full and decisive against them; and man, by the very nature of his birth and growth, is so much the creature of authority, that there is no way of effectually resisting it, but by undermining the reverence for the past *in toto*. Thus, the Jewish Prophets have, forsooth, a certain degree of antiquarian value, as being the only specimens extant of the oracles of a barbarous tribe: the Evangelists are to be interpreted with a due allowance for their superstitious prejudices concerning evil spirits, and St. Paul never suffers them to forget that he had

been brought up at the feet of a Jewish Rabbi! The Greeks indeed were a fine people in works of taste; but as to their philosophers—the writings of Plato are smoke and flash from the witch's cauldron of a disturbed imagination:—Aristotle's works a quickset hedge of fruitless and thorny distinctions; and all the philosophers before Plato and Aristotle fablers and allegorisers!

But these men have had their day: and there are signs of the times clearly announcing that that day is verging to its close. Even now there are not a few, on whose convictions it will not be uninfluencing to know, that the power, by which men are led to the truth of things, instead of the appearances, was deemed and entitled the living and substantial Word of God by the soundest of the Hebrew Doctors; that the eldest and most profound of the Greek philosophers demanded assent to their doctrine, mainly as *σοφία θεοπαράδοτος*, that is, a traditionary wisdom that had its origin in inspiration; that these men referred the same power to the *πῦρ ἀείζων ὑπὸ διοικούντος Λόγου*; and that they were scarcely less express than their scholar Philo Judæus, in their affirmations of the Logos, as no mere attribute or quality, no mode of abstraction, no personification, but literally and mysteriously *Deus alter et idem*.

When education has disciplined the minds of our

gentry for austerer study; when educated men shall be ashamed to look abroad for truths that can be only found within; within themselves they will discover, intuitively will they discover, the distinctions between *the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world*; and the understanding, which forms the *peculium* of each man, as different in extent and value from another man's understanding, as his estate may be from his neighbour's estate. The words of St. John, i. 7—12, are in their whole extent interpretable of the understanding, which derives its rank and mode of being in the human race (that is, as far as it may be contrasted with the instinct of the dog or elephant, in all, which constitutes it human understanding) from the universal light. This light, therefore, comes as to its own. Being rejected, it leaves the understanding to a world of dreams and darkness: for in it alone is life and the *life is the light of men*. What then but apparitions can remain to a philosophy, which strikes death through all things visible and invisible; satisfies itself then only when it can explain those abstractions of the outward senses, which by an unconscious irony it names indifferently facts and *phænomena*, mechanically—that is, by the laws of death; and brands with the name of mysticism every solution grounded in life, or the powers and intuitions of life?



On the other hand, if the light be received by faith, to such understandings it delegates the privilege (*ἐξουσίαν*) to become sons of God, expanding while it elevates, even as the beams of the sun incorporate with the mist, and make its natural darkness and earthly nature the bearer and interpreter of their own glory. Ἐὰν μὴ πιστεύσητε, οὐ μὴ συνήτε.

The very same truth is found in a fragment of the Ephesian Heraclitus, preserved by Stobæus. Ἐὖν νόφ λέγοντας ἰσχυρίζεσθαι χρή τῷ ξυνῷ πάντων τρέφονται γὰρ πάντες οἱ ἀνθρώπιννοι νόοι ὑπὸ ἐνὸς τοῦ θείου (Λόγου) κρατεῖ γὰρ τοσοῦτον ὁ κόσμος ἐθέλει, καὶ ἐξαρκεῖ πᾶσι καὶ περιγίνεται.\*—To discourse rationally (if we would render the discursive understanding discourse of reason) it behoves us to derive strength from that which is common to all men (*the light that lighteth every man*). For all human understandings are nourished by the one Divine Word, whose power is commensurate with his will, and is sufficient for all and overfloweth (*shineth in darkness, and is not contained therein, or comprehended by the darkness*).

This was Heraclitus, whose book is nearly six hundred years older than the Gospel of St. John, and who was proverbially entitled the Dark (ὁ σκοτεινός.) But it was a darkness which Socrates

\* Serm. III.—Ed.

would not condemn,\* and which would probably appear to enlightened Christians the darkness of prophecy, had the work, which he hid in the temple, been preserved to us. But obscurity is a word of many meanings. It may be in the subject; it may be in the author; or it may be in the reader;—and this again may originate in the state of the reader's heart; or in that of his capacity; or in his temper; or in his accidental associations. Two kinds are especially pointed out by the divine Plato in his *Sophistes*. The beauty of the original is beyond my reach. On my anxiety to give the fulness of the thought, I must ground my excuse for construing rather than translating. The fidelity of the version may well atone for its harshness in a passage that deserves a meditation beyond the ministry of words, even the words of Plato himself, though in them, or no where, are to be heard the sweet sounds, that issued from the head of Memnon at the touch of light.—“One thing is the hardness to be understood of the sophist, another that of the philosopher. The former retreating into the obscurity of that which hath not true being, (τοῦ μὴ

\* Diogenes Laertius has preserved the characteristic criticism of Socrates. Φασὶ δ' Εὐριπίδην αὐτῷ δόντα τοῦ Ἡρακλείτου σύγγραμμα, ἔρεσθαι, τί δοκεῖ; τὸν δὲ φάναι, “Α μὲν συνῆκα, γενναῖα” οἶμαι δὲ, καὶ ἃ μὴ συνῆκα· πλὴν Δηλίου γέ τινος δέεται κολυμβητοῦ. II. v. 7.—*Ed.*

ὄντος) and by long intercourse accustomed to the same, is hard to be known on account of the duskness of the place. But the philosopher by contemplation of pure reason evermore approximating to the idea of true being (τοῦ ὄντος) is by no means easy to be seen on account of the splendour of that region. For the intellectual eyes of the many flit, and are incapable of looking fixedly toward the God-like." \*

There are, I am aware, persons who willingly admit, that not in articles of faith alone, but in the heights of geometry, and even in the necessary first principles of natural philosophy, there exist truths of apodictic force in reason, which the mere understanding strives in vain to comprehend. Take, as an instance, the descending series of infinites in every finite, a position which involves a contradiction

\* The passage is:—

ΕΕ. Τὸν μὲν δὴ φιλόσοφον ἐν τοιοῦτῳ τινὶ τόπῳ καὶ νῦν καὶ ἔπειτα ἀνευρήσομεν, εἰς ζητῶμεν, ἰδεῖν μὲν χαλεπὸν ἐναργῶς καὶ τοῦτον, ἕτερον μὴν τρόπον ἢ τε τοῦ σοφιστοῦ χαλεπότης ἢ τε τούτου.

ΘΕΑΙ. Πῶς;

ΕΕ. Ὁ μὲν ἀποδιδράσκων εἰς τὴν τοῦ μὴ ὄντος σκοτεινότητα, τριβῇ προσπατόμενος αὐτῆς, διὰ τὸ σκοτεινὸν τοῦ τόπου κατανοῆσαι χαλεπός. ἢ γάρ;

ΘΕΑΙ. Ὅμοιον

ΕΕ. Ὁ δὲ γε φιλόσοφος, τῇ τοῦ ὄντος ἀεὶ διὰ λογισμῶν πρόσκειμενος ἰδέει, διὰ τὸ λαμπρὸν αὐτῆς χάρας οὐδαμῶς εὐπετὴς ὀφθῆναι· τὰ γὰρ τῆς τῶν πολλῶν ψυχῆς ὕμματα καρτερεῖν πρὸς τὸ θεῖον ἀφορώμενα ἀδύνατα. S. 84.—Ed.

for the understanding, yet follows demonstrably from the very definition of body, as that which fills a space. For wherever there is a space filled, there must be an extension to be divided. When, therefore, maxims generalised from appearances (*phænomena*) are applied to substances; when rules, abstracted or deduced from forms in time and space, are used as measures of spiritual being, yea even of the Divine Nature which cannot be compared or classed; (*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.* Isaiah, lv. 8)—such professors cannot but protest against the whole process, as grounded on a gross *metabasis eis állo génos*. Yet still they are disposed to tolerate it as a sort of sanative counter-excitement, that holds in check the more dangerous disease of Methodism. But I more than doubt of both the positions. I do not think Methodism, Calvinistic or Wesleyan, the more dangerous disease; and even if it were, I should deny that it is at all likely to be counteracted by the rational Christianity of our modern Alogi (*λόγος πίστεως ἀλογος*!) who, mistaking unity for sameness, have been pleased by a misnomer not less contradictory to their own tenets than intolerant to those of Christians in general, to entitle themselves Unitarians. The two contagions attack each a wholly different class of minds and tempers, and each

tends to produce and justify the other, accordingly as the predisposition of the patient may chance to be. If fanaticism be as a fire in the flooring of the Church, the idolism of the unspiritualised understanding is the dry rot in its beams and timbers. ὕβριν χρὴ σβεννύειν μᾶλλον ἢ πυρκαϊήν, says Heraclitus.\* It is not the sect of Unitarian Dissenters, but the spirit of Unitarianism in the members of the Church that alarms me. To what open revilings, and to what whispered slanders, I subject my name by this public avowal, I well know: ἀπίστους γὰρ τινὰς εἶναι ἐπιστύφω· Ἡράκλειτός, φησιν, ἀκούσαι οὐκ ἐπισταμένους οὐδ' εἰπεῖν· ἀλλὰ καὶ, κύνας ὥς, βαύζουσιν ὃν ἂν μὴ γινώσκωσι.

(E.)

The accomplished author of the *Arcadia*, the star of serenest brilliance in the glorious constellation of Elizabeth's court, our England's Sir Philip Sidney, the paramount gentleman of Europe, the poet, warrior, and statesman, held high converse with Spenser on the idea of supersensual beauty; on all "earthly fair and amiable," as the symbol of that idea; and on music and poesy as its living educts. With the same genial reverence did the younger Algernon commune with Harrington and Milton on the idea of a perfect State; and in what sense

\* Diog. Laert. ix. 1.—*Ed.*

it is true, that the men (that is, the aggregate of the inhabitants of a country at any one time) are made for the State, not the State for the men. But these lights shine no longer, or for a few. *Exeunt*: and enter in their stead Holofernes and Costard, masked as Metaphysics and Common-sense. And these, too, have their ideas. The former has an idea that Hume, Hartley, and Condillac have exploded all ideas, but those of sensation; he has an idea that he was particularly pleased with the fine idea of the last-named philosopher, that there is no absurdity in asking What colour virtue is of? inasmuch as the proper philosophic answers would be black, blue, or bottle-green, according as the coat, waistcoat, and small-clothes might chance to be of the person, the series of whose motions had excited the sensations, which formed our idea of virtue. The latter has no idea of a better-flavoured haunch of venison than he dined off at the Albion. He admits that the French have an excellent idea of cooking in general, but holds that their best cooks have no more idea of dressing a turtle than the gourmands themselves, at Paris, have any real idea of the true taste and colour of the fat.

It is not impossible that a portion of the high value attached of late years to the dates and margins of our old folios and quartos may be transferred

to their contents. Even now there exists a shrewd suspicion in the minds of reading men, that not only Plato and Aristotle, but even Scotus Erigena,\* and the schoolmen from Peter Lombard† to Duns Scotus,‡ are not such mere blockheads, as they pass for with those who have never perused a line of their writings. What the results may be, should this ripen into conviction, I can but guess. But all history seems to favour the persuasion I entertain, that in every age the speculative philosophy in general acceptance, the metaphysical opinions that happen to be predominant, will influence the theology of that age. Whatever is proposed for the belief, as true, must have been previously admitted by reason as possible, as involving no contradiction to the universal forms or laws of thought, no incompatibility in the terms of the proposition; and the determination on this head belongs exclusively to the science of metaphysics. In each article of faith embraced on conviction, the mind determines, first intuitively on its logical possibility; secondly, discursively, on its analogy to doctrines already believed, as well as on its correspondence to the wants and faculties of our nature; and thirdly, historically, on the direct and

\* He died at Oxford in 886.—*Ed.*

† He died Bishop of Paris in 1164.—*Ed.*

‡ He died in 1308.—*Ed.*

indirect evidences. But the probability of an event is a part of its historic evidence, and constitutes its presumptive proof, or the evidence *a priori*. Now as the degree of evidence *a posteriori*, requisite in order to a satisfactory proof of the actual occurrence of any fact stands, in an inverse ratio to the strength or weakness of the evidence *a priori* (that is, a fact probable in itself may be believed on slight testimony); it is manifest that of the three factors, by which the mind is determined to the admission or rejection of the point in question, the last, the historical, must be greatly influenced by the second, analogy, and that both depend on the first, logical congruity, not, indeed, as their cause or preconstituent, but as their indispensable condition; so that the very inquiry concerning them is preposterous (σόφισμα τοῦ ὑστέρου προτέρου) as long as the first remains undetermined. Again: the history of human opinions (ecclesiastical and philosophical history) confirms by manifold instances, what attentive consideration of the position itself might have authorised us to presume, namely, that on all such subjects as are out of the sphere of the senses, and therefore incapable of a direct proof from outward experience, the question whether any given position is logically impossible (incompatible with reason) or only incomprehensible (that is, not reducible to the forms of sense, namely, time and space, or those



of the understanding, namely, quantity, quality, and relation) in other words, the question, whether an assertion be in itself inconceivable, or only by us unimaginable, will be decided by each individual according to the positions assumed as first principles in the metaphysical system which he has previously adopted. Thus, the existence of a Supreme Reason, the creator of the material universe, involved a contradiction for a disciple of Epicurus, who had convinced himself that causative thought was tantamount to something out of nothing, or substance out of shadow, and incompatible with the axiom *Nihil ex nihilo*: While on the contrary to a Platonist this position, that thought or mind essentially, *vel sensu eminenti*, is causative, is necessarily pre-supposed in every other truth, as that without which every fact of experience would involve a contradiction in reason. Now it is not denied that the framers of our Church Liturgy, Homilies and Articles, entertained metaphysical opinions irreconcilable in their first principles with the system of speculative philosophy which has been taught in this country, and only not universally received, since the asserted and generally believed defeat of the Bishop of Worcester (the excellent Stillingfleet) in his famous controversy with Mr. Locke. Assuredly therefore it is well worth the consideration of our Clergy whether it is at all probable

in itself, or congruous with experience, that the disputed Articles of our Church *de revelatis et credendis* should be adopted with singleness of heart, and in the light of knowledge, when the grounds and first philosophy, on which the framers themselves rested the antecedent credibility (may we not add even the revelability?) of the Articles in question, have been exchanged for principles the most dissimilar, if not contrary? It may be said and truly, that the Scriptures, and not metaphysical systems, are our best and ultimate authority. And doubtless, on Revelation must we rely for the truth of the doctrines. Yet what is considered incapable of being conceived as possible, will be deemed incapable of having been revealed as real: and that philosophy has hitherto had a negative voice, as to the interpretation of the Scriptures in high and doctrinal points, is proved by the course of argument adopted in the controversial volumes of all the orthodox divines from Origen to Bishop Bull, as well as by the very different sense attached to the same texts by the disciples of the modern *metaphysique*, wherever they have been at liberty to form their own creeds according to their own expositions.

I repeat the question then: is it likely, that the faith of our ancestors will be retained when their philosophy is rejected,—rejected *a priori*, as baseless

notions not worth inquiring into, as obsolete errors which it would be slaying the slain to confute? Should the answer be in the negative, it would be no strained inference that the Clergy at least, as the conservators of the national faith, and the accredited representatives of learning in general amongst us might with great advantage to their own peace of mind qualify themselves to judge for themselves concerning the comparative worth and solidity of the two schemes. Let them make the experiment, whether a patient re-hearing of their predecessors' cause, with enough of predilection for the men to counterpoise the prejudices against their system, might not induce them to move for a new trial;—a result of no mean importance in my opinion, were it on this account alone, that it would recall certain ex-dignitaries in the book-republic from their long exile on the shelves of our public libraries to their old familiar station on the reading desks of our theological students. However strong the presumption were in favour of principles authorised by names that must needs be so dear and venerable to a minister of the Church in England, as those of Hooker, Whitaker, Field, Donne, Selden Stillingfleet,—(masculine intellects, formed under the robust discipline of an age memorable for keenness of research, and iron industry)—yet no undue preponderance from any previous weight in this

scale will be apprehended by minds capable of estimating the counter-weights, which it must first bring to a balance in the scale opposite. The obstinacy of opinions that have always been taken for granted, opinions unassailable even by the remembrance of a doubt, the silent accrescence of belief from the unwatched depositions of a general, never-contradicted, hearsay ; the concurring suffrage of modern books, all pre-supposing or re-asserting the same principles with the same confidence, and with the same contempt for all prior systems ;—and among these, works of highest authority, appealed to in our Legislature, and lectured on at our Universities ; the very books, perhaps, that called forth our own first efforts in thinking ; the solutions and confutations in which must therefore have appeared tenfold more satisfactory from their having given us our first information of the difficulties to be solved, of the opinions to be confuted.—Verily, a clergyman's partiality towards the tenets of his forefathers must be intense beyond all precedent, if it can more than sustain itself against antagonists so strong in themselves, and with such mighty adjuncts.

Nor in this enumeration dare I (though fully aware of the obloquy to which I am exposing myself) omit the noticeable fact, that we have attached a portion even of our national glory (not

only to the system itself, that system of disguised and decorous Epicureanism, which has been the only orthodox philosophy of the last hundred years ; but also, and more emphatically) to the name of the assumed father of the system, who raised it to its present pride of place, and almost universal acceptance throughout Europe. And how was this effected ? Extrinsically, by all the causes, consequences, and accompaniments of the Revolution in 1688 : by all the opinions, interests, and passions, which counteracted by the sturdy prejudices of the mal-contented with the Revolution ; qualified by the compromising character of its chief conductors ; not more propelled by the spirit of enterprise and hazard in our commercial towns, than kept in check by the characteristic *vis inertia* of the peasantry and landholders ; both parties cooled and lessoned by the equal failure of the destruction, and of the restoration, of monarchy ;—it was effected extrinsically, I say, by the same influences, which—(not in and of themselves, but with all these and sundry other modifications)—combined under an especial control of Providence to perfect and secure the majestic temple of the British Constitution :—but the very same which in France, without this providential counterpoise, overthrew the motley fabric of feudal oppression to build up in its stead the madhouse of Jacobinism. Intrinsically, and as far

as the philosophic scheme itself is alone concerned, it was effected by the mixed policy and *bonhomie*, with which the author contrived to retain in his celebrated work whatever the system possesses of soothing for the indolence, and of flattering for the vanity, of men's average understandings: while he kept out of sight all its darker features which outrage the instinctive faith and moral feelings of mankind, ingeniously threading-on the dried and shrivelled, yet still wholesome and nutritious, fruits plucked from the rich grafts of ancient wisdom, to the barren and worse than barren fig tree of the mechanic philosophy. Thus, the sensible Christians, *the angels of the church of Laodicea*, with the numerous and mighty sect of their admirers, delighted with the discovery that they could purchase the decencies and the creditableness of religion at so small an expenditure of faith, extolled the work for its pious conclusions: while the infidels, wiser in their generation than the children (at least than these nominal children) of light, eulogised it with no less zeal for the sake of its principles and assumptions, and with the foresight of those obvious and only legitimate conclusions, that might and would be deduced from them. Great at all times and almost incalculable are the influences of party spirit in exaggerating contemporary reputation; but never perhaps from the first

syllable of recorded time were they exerted under such a concurrence and conjunction of fortunate accidents, of helping and furthering events and circumstances, as in the instance of Mr. Locke.

I am most fully persuaded, that the principles both of taste, morals, and religion taught in our most popular *compendia* of moral and political philosophy, natural theology, evidences of Christianity, and the like, are false, injurious, and debasing. But I am likewise not less deeply convinced that all the well-meant attacks on the writings of modern infidels and heretics, in support either of the miracles or of the mysteries of the Christian religion, can be of no permanent utility, while the authors themselves join in the vulgar appeal to common sense as the one infallible judge in matters, which become subjects of philosophy only, because they involve a contradiction between this common sense and our moral instincts, and require therefore an arbiter, which containing both *eminenter* must be higher than either. We but mow down the rank misgrowth instead of cleansing the soil, as long as we ourselves protect and manure, as the pride of our garden, a tree of false knowledge, which looks fair and shewy and variegated with fruits not its own, that hang from the branches which have at various times been ingrafted on its stem; but from the roots of which under-ground

the runners are sent off, that shoot up at a distance and bring forth the true and natural crop. I will speak plainly, though in so doing I must bid defiance to all the flatterers of the folly and foolish self-opinion of the half-instructed many. The articles of our Church, and the true principles of government and social order, will never be effectually and consistently maintained against their antagonists till the champions have themselves ceased to worship the same Baal with their enemies, till they have cast out the common idol from the recesses of their own convictions, and with it the whole service and ceremonial of idolism. While all parties agree in their abjuration of Plato and Aristotle, and in their contemptuous neglect of the Schoolmen and the scholastic logic, without which the excellent Selden (that genuine English mind whose erudition, broad, deep, and manifold as it was, is yet less remarkable than his robust healthful common sense) affirms it impossible for a divine thoroughly to comprehend or reputably to defend the whole undiminished and unadulterated scheme of Catholic faith, while all alike pre-assume, with Mr. Locke, that the mind contains only the reliques of the senses, and therefore proceed with him to explain the substance from the shadow, the voice from the echo,—they can but detect each the other's inconsistencies. The champion of



orthodoxy will victoriously expose the bald and staring incongruity of the Socinian scheme with the language of Scripture, and with the final causes of all revealed religion:—the Socinian will retort on the orthodox the incongruity of a belief in mysteries with his own admissions concerning the origin, and nature of all tenable ideas, and as triumphantly expose the pretences of believing in a form of words, to which the believer himself admits that he can attach no consistent meaning. Lastly, the godless materialist, as the only consistent because the only consequent reasoner, will secretly laugh at both. If these sentiments should be just, the consequences are so important that every well-educated man, who has given proofs that he has at least patiently studied the subject, deserves a patient hearing. Had I not the authority of the greatest and noblest intellects for at least two thousand years on my side, yet from the vital interest of the opinions themselves, and their natural, unconstrained, and (as it were) spontaneous coalescence with the faith of the Catholic Church, (they being, moreover, the opinions of its most eminent Fathers) I might appeal to all orthodox Christians, whether they adhere to the faith only or both to the faith and forms of the Church, in the words of my motto: *Ad isthæc quæso vos, qualiacunque. primo videantur aspectu*

*attendite, ut qui vobis forsan insanire videar, saltem quibus insaniam rationibus cognoscatis.*

There are still a few, however, young men of loftiest minds, and the very stuff out of which the sword and shield of truth and honour are to be made, who will not withdraw all confidence from the writer, although

'Tis true, that passionate for ancient truths  
And honouring with religious love the great  
Of elder times, he hated to excess,  
With an unquiet and intolerant scorn,  
The hollow puppets of a hollow age  
Ever idolatrous, and changing ever  
Its worthless idols !\*

a few there are, who will still less be indisposed to follow him in his milder mood, whenever their Friend,

Piercing the long-neglected holy cave,  
The haunt obscure of Old Philosophy,  
Shall bid with lifted torch its starry walls  
Sparkle, as erst they sparkled to the flame  
Of odorous lamps tended by saint and sage!†

I have hinted, above, at the necessity of a glossary, and I will conclude these supplementary remarks with a nomenclature of the principal terms which occur in the elements of speculative philosophy, in their old and rightful sense, according to my belief; at all events the sense in which I have myself

\* Poet. Works, I. p. 200.—*Ed.*

† Ibid.—*Ed.*

employed them. The most general term (*genus summum*) belonging to the speculative intellect, as distinguished from acts of the will, is Representation, or (still better) Presentation.

A conscious Presentation, if it refers exclusively to the subject, as a modification of his own state of being, is = Sensation.

The same if it refers to an Object, is = Perception.

A Perception, immediate and individual, is = an Intuition.

The same, mediate, and by means of a character or mark common to several things, is = a Conception.

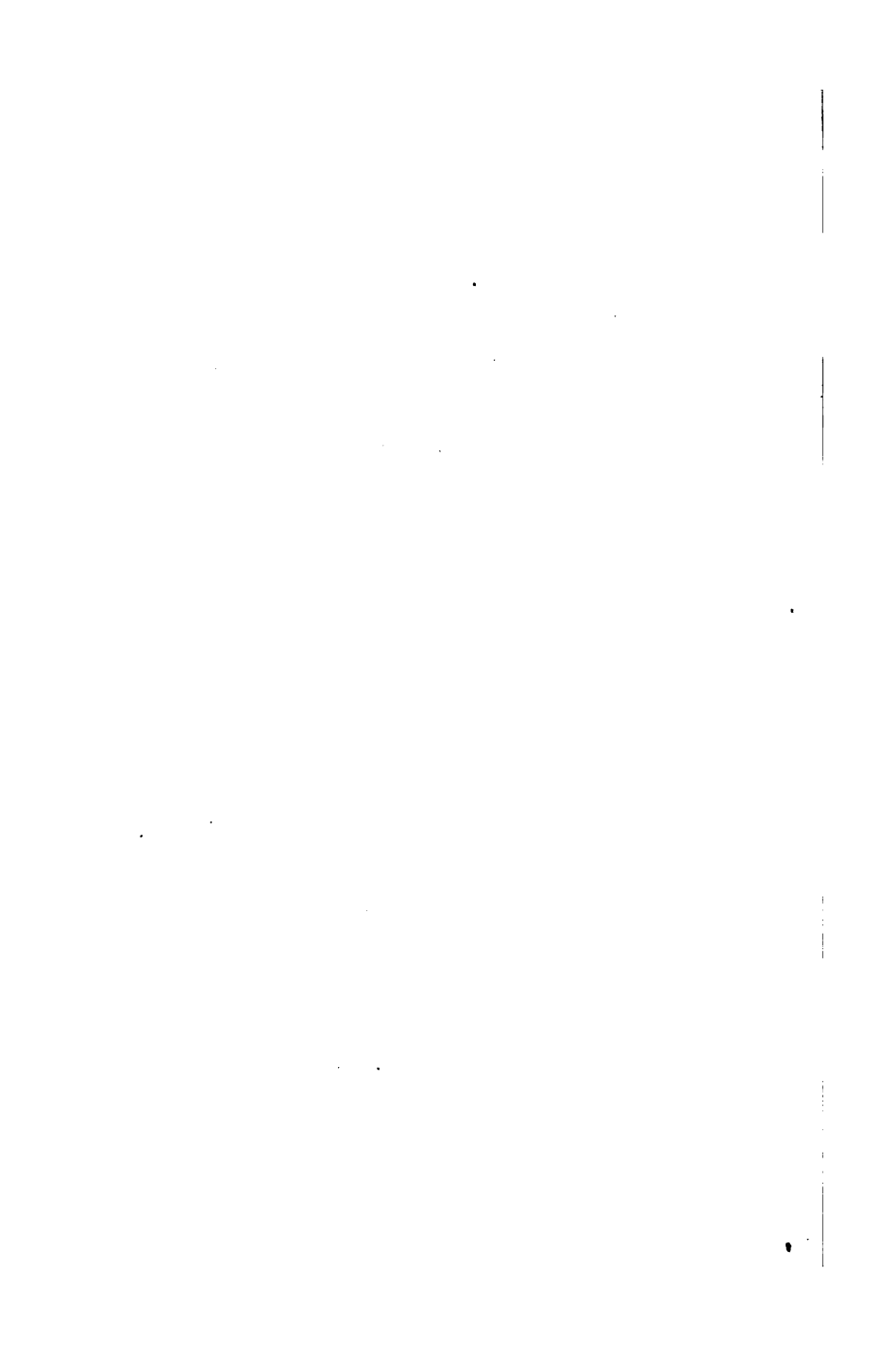
A Conception, extrinsic and sensuous, is = a Fact, or a Cognition.

The same, purely mental and abstracted from the forms of the understanding itself = a Notion.

A notion may be realised, and becomes cognition; but that which is neither a sensation nor a perception, that which is neither individual (that is, a sensible intuition) nor general (that is, a conception) which neither refers to outward facts, nor yet is abstracted from the forms of perception contained in the understanding; but which is an educt of the imagination actuated by the pure reason, to which there neither is nor can be an adequate correspondent in the world of the senses;—this and this alone is = an Idea. Whether ideas are

regulative only, according to Aristotle and Kant; or likewise constitutive, and one with the power and life of nature, according to Plato and Plotinus (*ἐν λόγῳ ζωὴ ἦν, καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων*) is the highest problem of philosophy, and not part of its nomenclature.\*

\* See Table Talk, p. 95, 2d edit.—*Ed.*



**A LAY SERMON,**

**ADDRESSED TO**

**THE HIGHER AND MIDDLE CLASSES, ON THE EXISTING  
DISTRESSES AND DISCONTENTS. 1817.**

Ἐὰν μὴ ἐλπίζητε, ἀνέλπιστον οὐκ εὐρήσετε, ἀνεξερεύνητον ὃν  
καὶ ἄπορον. HERACLITUS.

If ye do not hope, ye will not find; for in despairing ye  
block up the mine at its mouth, ye extinguish the torch,  
even when ye are already in the shaft.

God and the world we worship still together,  
Draw not our laws to Him, but His to ours;  
Untrue to both, so prosperous in neither,  
The imperfect will brings forth but barren flowers!  
Unwise as all distracted interests be,  
Strangers to God, fools in humanity:  
Too good for great things and too great for good,  
While still "*I dare not*" waits upon "*I would.*"

## INTRODUCTION.

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FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN! You I mean, who fill the higher and middle stations of society! The comforts, perchance the splendours, that surround you, designate your rank, but cannot constitute your moral and personal fitness for it. Be it enough for others to know that you are its legal,—but by what mark shall you stand accredited to your own consciences, as its worthy,—possessors? Not by common sense or common honesty; for these are equally demanded of all classes, and therefore mere negative qualifications in your rank of life, or characteristic only by the aggravated ignominy consequent on their absence. Not by genius or splendid talent; for these, as being gifts of nature, are objects of moral interest for those alone, to whom they have been allotted. Nor yet by eminence in learning; for this supposes such a devotion of time and thought, as would in many cases be incompatible with the claims of active life. Erudition is, doubtless, an ornament that especially befits



a high station : but it is professional rank only that renders its attainment a duty.

The mark in question must be so far common, that we may be entitled to look for it in you from the mere circumstance of your situation, and so far distinctive, that it must be such as cannot be expected generally from the inferior classes. Now either there is no such criterion in existence, or the *desideratum* is to be found in an habitual consciousness of the ultimate principles, in reference to which you think and act. The least that can be demanded of the least favoured among you is an earnest endeavour to walk in the light of your own knowledge; and not, as the mass of mankind, by laying hold on the skirts of custom. Blind followers of a blind and capricious guide, forced likewise (though oftener, I fear, by their own improvidence,\* than by the lowness of their estate) to

\* A truth, that should not however be said, save in the spirit of charity, and with the palliating reflection, that this very improvidence has hitherto been, though not the inevitable, yet the natural result of poverty and the Poor Laws. With what gratitude I venerate my country and its laws, my humble publications from the *Fears in Solitude*, printed in 1798 (*Poet. Works*, I. p. 132), to the present discourse bear witness.—Yet the Poor Laws and the Revenue!—If I permitted myself to dwell on these exclusively, I should be tempted to fancy that the domestic seals were put in commission and entrusted to Argus, Briareus, and Cacus as lords of the commonalty. Alas! it is easy to see

consume life in the means of living, the multitude may make the sad confession

*Tempora mutantur ; nos et mutamur in illis,*

unabashed. But to Englishmen in the enjoyment of a present competency, much more to such as are

the evil ; but to imagine a remedy is difficult in exact proportion to the experience and good sense of the seeker. That excellent man, Mr. Perceval, whom I regard as the best and wisest statesman this country has possessed since the Revolution—(I judge only from his measures and the reports of his speeches in Parliament, for I never saw him)—went into the Ministry, with the design as well as the wish of abolishing lotteries. I was present at a table, when this intention was announced by a venerable relative of the departed statesman, who loved and honoured the man, but widely dissented from him as a politician. Except myself, all present were partisans of the Opposition ; but all avowed their determination on this score alone, as a great moral precedent, to support the new minister. What was the result ? Two lotteries in the first year instead of one ! The door of the cabinet has a quality the most opposite to the ivory gate of Virgil. It suffers no dreams to pass through it. Alas ! as far as any wide scheme of benevolence is concerned, the inscription over it might seem to be the Dantean

*Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch'entrate !*

We judge harshly because we expect irrationally. But on the other hand, this disproportion of the power to the wish will, sooner or later, end in that tame acquiescence in things as they are, which is the sad symptom of a moral *necrosis* commencing. And commence it will, if its causes are not counteracted by the philosophy of history, that is, by history read in the spirit of prophecy ;—if they are not overcome by the faith which, still re-kindling hope, still re-enlivens

defended against the anxious future, it must needs be a grievous dishonour (and not the less grievous, though perhaps less striking, from its frequency) to change with the times, and thus to debase their motives and maxims, the sacred household of conscience, into slaves and creatures of fashion. *Thou therefore art inexcusable, O man !* (Rom. ii. 1.) if thou dost not give to thyself *a reason for the faith that is in thee* : if thou dost not thereby learn the safety and the blessedness of that other Apostolic precept, *Whatsoever ye do, do it in faith*. Your habits of reflection should at least be equal to your opportunities of leisure, and to that which is itself a species of leisure,—your immunity from bodily labour, from the voice and lash of the imperious ever-recurring this day. Your attention to the objects that stretch away below you in the living landscape of good and evil, and your researches into their existing or practicable bearings on each other, should be proportional to the elevation that extends and diversifies your prospect. If you possess more than is necessary for your own wants, more than your own wants ought to be felt by you as your

charity. Without the knowledge of man, the knowledge of men is a hazardous acquisition. What insight might not our statesmen acquire from the study of the Bible merely as history, if only they had been previously accustomed to study history in the same spirit, as that in which good men read the Bible !

own interests. You are pacing on a smooth terrace, which you owe to the happy institutions of your country,—a terrace on the mountain's breast. To what purpose, by what moral right, if you continue to gaze only on the sod beneath your feet? Or if converting means into ends and with all your thoughts and efforts absorbed in selfish schemes of climbing cloudward, you turn your back on the wide landscape, and stoop the lower, the higher you ascend?

The remedial and prospective advantages that may be rationally anticipated from the habit of contemplating particulars in their universal laws; its tendency at once to fix and to liberalise the morality of private life, at once to produce and enlighten the spirit of public zeal; and let me add, its especial utility in recalling the origin and primary purport of the term, generosity,\* to the heart and thoughts of a populace tampered with by sophists and incendiaries of the revolutionary school: these advantages I have felt it my duty and have made it my main object to press on your serious attention during the whole period of my literary labours from earliest manhood to the present hour.

\* *A genere*: the qualities either supposed natural and instinctive to men of noble race, or such as their rank is calculated to inspire, as disinterestedness, devotion to the service of their friends and clients, frankness, and the like.

Whatever may have been the specific theme of my communications, and whether they related to criticism, politics, or religion, still principles, their subordination, their connexion, and their application, in all the divisions of our tastes, duties, rules of conduct and schemes of belief, have constituted my chapter of contents.

It is an unsafe partition which divides opinions without principle from unprincipled opinions: and if the latter are not followed by correspondent actions, we are indebted for the escape, not to the agent himself, but to his habits of education, to the sympathies of superior rank, to the necessity of character, often, perhaps, to the absence of temptation from providential circumstances or the accident of a gracious nature. These, indeed, are truths of all times and places; but I seemed to see especial reason for insisting on them in our own times. A long and attentive observation had convinced me that formerly men were worse than their principles, but that at present the principles are worse than the men.

Few are sufficiently aware how much reason most of us have, even as common moral livers, to thank God for being Englishmen. It would furnish grounds both for humility towards Providence and for increased attachment to our country, if each individual could but see and feel how large a part

of his innocence he owes to his birth, breeding, and residence in Great Britain. The administration of the laws; the almost continual preaching of moral prudence; the pressure of our ranks on each other, with the consequent reserve and watchfulness of demeanour in the superior ranks, and the emulation in the subordinate; the vast depth, expansion and systematic movements of our trade; and the consequent interdependence, the arterial or nervelike network of property, which make every deviation from outward integrity a calculable loss to the offending individual himself from its mere effects, as obstruction and irregularity; and lastly, the naturalness of doing as others do:—these and the like influences, peculiar, some in the kind and all in the degree, to this privileged island, are the buttresses, on which our foundationless well-doing is upholden even as a house of cards, the architecture of our infancy, in which each is supported by all.

Well then may we pray, *Give us peace in our time, O Lord!* Well for us if no revolution, or other general visitation, betray the true state of our national morality! But above all, well will it be for us if even now we dare disclose the secret to our own souls! Well will it be for as many of us as have duly reflected on the Prophet's assurance, *that we must take root downwards, if we would bear*

*fruit upwards*; if we would bear fruit, and continue to bear fruit, when the foodful plants that stand straight, only because they grow in company, or whose slender surface-roots owe their whole steadfastness to their intertangement, have been beaten down by the continued rains, or whirled aloft by the sudden hurricane. Nor have we far to seek for what ever it is most important that we should find. The wisdom from above has not ceased for us. *The principles of the oracles of God* (Heb. v. 12) are still uttered from before the altar;—oracles, which we may consult without cost;—before an altar where no sacrifice is required, but of the vices which unman us; no victims demanded, but the unclean and animal passions, which we may have suffered to house within us, forgetful of our Baptismal dedication,—no victim, but the spiritual sloth, or goat, or fox, or hog, which lay waste the vineyard that the Lord had fenced and planted for himself.

I have endeavoured in my previous discourse to persuade the more highly gifted and educated part of my friends and fellow-Christians, that as the New Testament sets forth the means and conditions of spiritual convalescence, with all the laws of conscience relative to our future state and permanent being; so does the Bible present to us the elements of public prudence, instructing us in the true

causes, the surest preventives, and the only cures, of public evils. The authorities of Raleigh, Clarendon, and Milton must at least exempt me from the blame of singularity, if undeterred by the contradictory charges of paradox from one party and of adherence to vulgar and old-fashioned prejudices from the other, I persist in avowing my conviction, that the inspired poets, historians and sententiaries of the Jews, are the clearest teachers of political economy: in short, that their writings\* are the

\* To which I should be tempted with Burke to annex that treasure of prudential wisdom, the Ecclesiasticus. I not only yield, however, to the authority of our Church, but reverence the judgment of its founders in separating this work from the list of the canonical books, and in refusing to apply it to the establishment of any doctrine, while they caused it to be "read for example of life and instruction of manners." Excellent, nay, invaluable as this book is in the place assigned to it by our Church, that place is justified on the clearest grounds. For not to say that the compiler himself candidly cautions us against the imperfections of his translation, and its no small difference from the original Hebrew, as it was written by his grandfather, he so expresses himself in his prologue as to exclude all claims to inspiration or divine authority in any other or higher sense than every writer is entitled to make, who having qualified himself by the careful study of the books of other men had been drawn on to write something himself. But of still greater weight practically, are the objections derived from certain passages of the book, which savour too plainly of the fancies and prejudices of a Jew of Jerusalem; for example, c. 1, 25-26, and of greater still the objections drawn from other passages, as from c. xli., which by implication and obvious inference



statesman's best manual, not only as containing the first principles and ultimate grounds of State-policy whether in prosperous times or in those of danger and distress, but as supplying likewise the details of their application, and as being a full and spacious repository of precedents and facts in proof.

Well therefore (again and again I repeat to you), well will it be for us if we have provided ourselves from this armoury while *yet the day of*

are nearly tantamount to a denial of a future state, and bear too great a resemblance to the ethics of the Greek poets and orators in the substitution of posthumous fame for a true resurrection and a consequent personal endurance; the substitution, in short, of a nominal for a real immortality. Lastly the prudential spirit of the maxims in general in which prudence is taught too much on its own grounds instead of being recommended as the organ or vehicle of a spiritual principle in its existing wordly relations. In short, prudence ceases to be wisdom when it is not to the filial fear of God, and to the sense of the excellence of the divine laws, what the body is to the soul. Now in the work of the son of Sirach, prudence is both body and soul.

It were perhaps to be wished, that this work, and the Wisdom of Solomon had alone received the honour of being accompaniments to the inspired writings, and that these should, with a short precautionary preface and a few notes have been printed in all our Bibles. The remaining books might without any loss have been left for the learned or for as many as were prompted by curiosity to purchase them, in a separate volume. Even of the Maccabees not above a third part can be said to possess any historic value, as authentic accounts.

*trouble and of treading down and of perplexity appears at far distance and only in the valley of vision: if we have humbled ourselves and have confessed our thin and unsound state, even while from the uttermost parts of the earth we were hearing songs of praise and glory to the upright nation. (Is. xxii. 5. xxiv. 16.)*

But if indeed *the day of treading down* is present, it is still in our power to convert it into a time of substantial discipline for ourselves and of enduring benefit to the present generation and to posterity. The splendour of our exploits, during the late war, is less honourable to us than the magnanimity of our views, and our generous confidence in the victory of the better cause. Accordingly, we have obtained a good name, so that the nations around us have displayed a disposition to follow our example and imitate our institutions; too often I fear even in parts where from the difference of our relative circumstances the imitation had little chance of proving more than mimicry. But it will be far more glorious, and to our neighbours incomparably more instructive, if in distresses to which all countries are liable we bestir ourselves in remedial and preventive arrangements which all nations may more or less adopt; inasmuch as they are grounded on principles intelligible to all rational, and obligatory on all moral, beings;

inasmuch as, having been taught by God's word, exemplified by God's providence, commanded by God's law, and recommended by promises of God's grace, they alone can form the foundations of a Christian community. Do we love our country? These are the principles by which the true friend of the people is contradistinguished from the factious demagogue. They are at once the rock and the quarry. On these alone and with these alone is the solid welfare of a people to be built. Do we love our own souls? These are the principles, the neglect of which writes hypocrite and suicide on the brow of the professing Christian. For these are the keystone of that arch on which alone we can cross the torrent of life and death with safety on the passage; with peace in the retrospect; and with hope shining upon us from through the cloud toward which we are travelling. Not, my Christian friends! by all the lamps of worldly wisdom clustered in one blaze can we guide our paths so securely as by fixing our eyes on this inevitable cloud, through which all must pass, which at every step becomes darker and more threatening to the children of this world, but to the children of faith and obedience still thins away as they approach, to melt at length and dissolve into that glorious light, from which as so many gleams and reflections of the same falling on us

during our mortal pilgrimage, we derive all principles of true and lively knowledge, alike in science and in morals, alike in communities and in individuals.

It has been my purpose throughout the following discourse to guard myself and my readers from extremes of all kinds: I will therefore conclude this Introduction by inforcing the maxim in its relation to our religious opinions, out of which, with or without our consciousness, all our other opinions flow as from their spring-head and perpetual feeder. And that I might neglect no innocent mode of attracting or relieving the reader's attention, I have moulded my reflections into the following

#### ALLEGORIC VISION.

A feeling of sadness, a peculiar melancholy, is wont to take possession of me alike in spring and in autumn. But in spring it is the melancholy of hope: in autumn it is the melancholy of resignation. As I was journeying on foot through the Apennine, I fell in with a pilgrim in whom the spring and the autumn and the melancholy of both seemed to have combined. In his discourse there were the freshness and the colours of April:

*Qual ramicel a ramo,  
Tal da pensier pensiero  
In lui germogliava.*

But as I gazed on his whole form and figure, I bethought me of the not unlovely decays, both of age and of the late season in the stately elm after the clusters have been plucked from its entwining vines, and the vines are as bands of dried withies around its trunk and branches. Even so there was a memory on his smooth and ample forehead, which blended with the dedication of his steady eyes, that still looked—I know not, whether upward, or far onward, or rather to the line of meeting where the sky rests upon the distance. But how may I express that dimness of abstraction which lay like the fitting tarnish from the breath of a sigh on a silver mirror, and which accorded with the lustre of the pilgrim's eyes, with their slow and reluctant movement, whenever he turned them to any object on the right hand or on the left? It seemed, methought, as if there lay upon the brightness a shadowy presence of disappointments now unfelt, but never forgotten. It was at once the melancholy of hope and of resignation.

We had not long been fellow-travellers, ere a sudden tempest of wind and rain forced us to seek protection in the vaulted door-way of a lone chapelry: and we sate face to face each on the stone bench along-side the low, weather-stained wall, and as close as possible to the massy door.

After a pause of silence: "Even thus," said he,

"like two strangers that have fled to the same shelter from the same storm, not seldom do despair and hope meet for the first time in the porch of death!" "All extremes meet," I answered; "but yours was a strange and visionary thought." "The better then doth it beseem both the place and me," he replied. "From a visionary wilt thou hear a vision? Mark that vivid flash through this torrent of rain. Fire and water. Even here thy adage holds true, and its truth is the moral of my vision." I entreated him to proceed. Sloping his face toward the arch and yet averting his eye from it, he seemed to seek and prepare his words: till listening to the wind that echoed within the hollow edifice, and to the rain without,

Which stole on his thoughts with its two-fold sound,  
The clash hard by and the murmur all round,

he gradually sank away, alike from me and from his own purpose, and amid the gloom of the storm and in the duskiness of that place he sate an emblem on a rich man's sepulchre, or like a mourner on the sodded grave of an only one, an aged mourner, who is watching the waned moon and sorroweth not. Starting at length from his brief trance of abstraction, with courtesy and an atoning smile he renewed his discourse, and commenced his parable.

“ During one of those short furloughs from the service of the body, which the soul may sometimes obtain even in this its militant state, I found myself in a vast plain, which I immediately knew to be the Valley of Life. It possessed an astonishing diversity of soils: here was a sunny spot, and there a dark one, forming just such a mixture of sunshine and shade, as we may have observed on the mountains’ side on an April day, when the thin broken clouds are scattered over heaven. Almost in the very entrance of the valley stood a large and gloomy pile, into which I seemed constrained to enter. Every part of the building was crowded with tawdry ornaments and fantastic deformity. On every window was portrayed, in glaring and inelegant colours, some horrible tale or preternatural incident, so that not a ray of light could enter, untinged by the *medium* through which it passed. The body of the building was full of people, some of them dancing in and out in unintelligible figures, with strange ceremonies and antic merriment, while others seemed convulsed with horror, or pining in mad melancholy. Intermingled with these, I observed a number of men, clothed in ceremonial robes, who appeared now to marshal the various groups and to direct their movements; and now with menacing countenances, to drag some reluctant victim to a vast idol, framed of

iron bars intercrossed, which formed at the same time an immense cage, and the shape of a human Colossus.

"I stood for a while lost in wonder, what these things might mean; when lo! one of the directors came up to me, and with a stern and reproachful look bade me uncover my head; for that the place, into which I had entered, was the temple of the only true religion, in the holier recesses of which the great Goddess personally resided. Himself too he bade me reverence, as the consecrated minister of her rites. Awe-struck by the name of religion, I bowed before the priest, and humbly and earnestly entreated him to conduct me into her presence. He assented. Offerings he took from me, with mystic sprinklings of water and with salt he purified, and with strange sufflations he exorcised, me; and then led me through many a dark and winding alley, the dew-damps of which chilled my flesh, and the hollow echoes under my feet, mingled, methought, with moanings, affrighted me. At length we entered a large hall without window, or spiracle, or lamp. The asylum and dormitory it seemed of perennial night; only that the walls were brought to the eye by a number of self-luminous inscriptions in letters of a pale sepulchral light, which held strange neutrality with the darkness, on the verge of which it kept its



rayless vigil. I could read them, methought; but though each one of the words taken separately I seemed to understand, yet when I took them in sentences, they were riddles and incomprehensible. As I stood meditating on these hard sayings, my guide thus addressed me,—‘Read and believe: these are mysteries!’—At the extremity of the vast hall the Goddess was placed. Her features, blended with darkness, rose out to my view, terrible, yet vacant. I prostrated myself before her, and then retired with my guide, soul-withered, and wondering, and dissatisfied.

“As I re-entered the body of the temple, I heard a deep buzz as of discontent. A few whose eyes were bright, and either piercing or steady, and whose ample foreheads, with the weighty bar, ridge-like, above the eyebrows, bespoke observation followed by meditative thought; and a much larger number who were enraged by the severity and insolence of the priests in exacting their offerings, had collected in one tumultuous group, and with a confused outcry of ‘This is the temple of Superstition!’ after much contumely, and turmoil, and cruel maltreatment on all sides, rushed out of the pile: and I, methought, joined them.

“We speeded from the temple with hasty steps, and had now nearly gone round half the valley, when we were addressed by a woman, tall beyond

the stature of mortals, and with a something more than human in her countenance and mien, which yet by mortals could be only felt, not conveyed by words or intelligibly distinguished. Deep reflection, animated by ardent feelings, was displayed in them: and hope, without its uncertainty, and a something more than all these, which I understood not; but which yet seemed to blend all these into a divine unity of expression. Her garments were white and matronly, and of the simplest texture. We inquired her name. My name, she replied, is Religion.

“The more numerous part of our company, affrighted by the very sound, and sore from recent impostures or sorceries, hurried onwards and examined no farther. A few of us, struck by the manifest opposition of her form and manner to those of the living idol, whom we had so recently abjured, agreed to follow her, though with cautious circumspection. She led us to an eminence in the midst of the valley, from the top of which we could command the whole plain, and observe the relation of the different parts, of each to the other, and of each to the whole, and of all to each. She then gave us an optic glass which assisted without contradicting our natural vision, and enabled us to see far beyond the limits of the Valley of Life: though our eye even thus assisted permitted us

only to behold a light and a glory, but what we could not descry, save only that it was, and that it was most glorious.

“And now with the rapid transition of a dream, I had overtaken and rejoined the more numerous party, who had abruptly left us, indignant at the very name of religion. They journeyed on, goading each other with remembrances of past oppressions, and never looking back, till in the eagerness to recede from the temple of Superstition they had rounded the whole circle of the valley. And lo! there faced us the mouth of a vast cavern, at the base of a lofty and almost perpendicular rock, the interior side of which, unknown to them, and unsuspected, formed the extreme and backward wall of the temple. An impatient crowd, we entered the vast and dusky cave, which was the only perforation of the precipice. At the mouth of the cave sate two figures; the first, by her dress and gestures, I knew to be Sensuality; the second form, from the fierceness of his demeanour and the brutal scornfulness of his looks, declared himself to be the monster Blasphemy. He uttered big words, and yet ever and anon I observed that he turned pale at his own courage. We entered. Some remained in the opening of the cave, with the one or the other of its guardians. The rest, and I among them, pressed on till we reached an

ample chamber, which seemed the centre of the rock. The climate of the place was unnaturally cold.

“In the furthest distance of the chamber sate an old dim-eyed man, poring with a microscope over the *torso* of a statue, which had neither base, nor feet, nor head; but on its breast was carved, Nature. To this he continually applied his glass, and seemed enraptured with the various inequalities which it rendered visible on the seemingly polished surface of the marble. Yet evermore was this delight and triumph followed by expressions of hatred, and vehement railing against a being, who yet, he assured us, had no existence. This mystery suddenly recalled to me what I had read in the holiest recess of the temple of Superstition. The old man spoke in divers tongues, and continued to utter other and most strange mysteries. Among the rest he talked much and vehemently concerning an infinite series of causes and effects, which he explained to be—a string of blind men, the last of whom caught hold of the skirt of the one before him, he of the next, and so on till they were all out of sight; and that they all walked infallibly straight, without making one false step, though all were alike blind. Methought I borrowed courage from surprise, and asked him,—‘Who then is at the head to guide them?’ He

looked at me with ineffable contempt, not unmixed with an angry suspicion, and then replied, 'No one;—the string of blind men goes on for ever without any beginning: for although one blind man cannot move without stumbling, yet infinite blindness supplies the want of sight.' I burst into laughter, which instantly turned to terror;—for as he started forward in rage, I caught a glance of him from behind; and lo! I beheld a monster bi-form and Janus-headed, in the hinder face and shape of which I instantly recognised the dread countenance of Superstition—and in the terror I awoke."

## A LAY SERMON,

ETC.

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*Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters.*

ISAIAH xxxii. 20.

ON all occasions the beginning should look toward the end; and most of all when we offer counsel concerning circumstances of great distress, and of still greater alarm. But such is my business at present, and the common duty of all whose competence justifies the attempt. And therefore, my Christian friends and fellow Englishmen, have I *in a day of trouble and of treading down and of perplexity*, taken my beginning from this assurance of an inspired messenger to *the devisers of liberal things* (xxxiii. 8), who confident in hope are fearless in charity. For to enforce the precept involved in this gladsome annunciation of the Evangelical herald, to awaken the lively feeling which it breathes, and to justify the line of conduct which it encourages, are the end to which my present

efforts are directed—the ultimate object of the present address, to which all the other points, therein discussed, are but introductory and preparative. *Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters.* It is the assurance of a Prophet, and therefore surety itself to all who profess to receive him as such. It is a command in the form of a promise, which at once instructs us in our duty and forecloses every possible objection to its performance. It is at once our guide and our pioneer—a breeze from Heaven, which at one and the same time determines our path, impels us along it, and removes beforehand each overhanging cloud that might have conspired with our own dimness to bewilder or to dishearten us. Whatever our own despondence may whisper, or the reputed masters of political economy may have seemed to demonstrate, neither by the fears and scruples of the one, nor by the confident affirmations of the other, let us be deterred. They must both be false if the Prophet is true. We will still in the power of that faith which can *hope even against hope* continue to sow beside all waters: for there is a blessing attached to it by God himself, to whose eye all consequences are present, on whose will all consequences depend.

But I had also an additional motive for the selection of this verse. Easy to be remembered

from its briefness, likely to be remembered from its beauty, and with not a single word in it which the malignant ingenuity of faction could pervert to the excitement of any dark or turbulent feeling, I chose it both as the text and title of this discourse, that it might be brought under the eye of many thousands who will know no more of the discourse itself than what they read in the advertisements of it in our public papers.

In point of fact it was another passage of Scripture, the words of another Prophet, that originally occasioned this address by one of those accidental circumstances, which so often determine the current of our thoughts. From a company among whom the distresses of the times and the disappointments of the public expectations had been agitated with more warmth than wisdom, I had retired to solitude and silent meditation. A Bible chanced to lie open on the table, my eyes were cast idly on the page for a few seconds, till gradually as a mist clears away, the following words became visible, and at once fixed my attention. *We looked for peace, but no good came; for a time of health, and behold, trouble.*—I turned to the beginning of the chapter: it was the eighth of the Prophet Jeremiah, and having read it to the end, I repeated aloud the verses which had become connected in my memory by their pertinency to the conversation, to which I



had been so lately attending : namely, the 11th, 15th, 20th, and 22nd.

*They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, Peace, when there is no peace. We looked for peace, but no good came : for a time of health, and behold, trouble ! The harvest is past, the summer is ended : and we are not saved. Is there no balm in Gilead ? Is there no physician ? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered ?*

These impassioned remonstrances, these heart-probing interrogatories, of the lamenting Prophet do indeed anticipate a full and alas ! a too faithful statement of the case, to the public consideration of which we have all of late been so often and so urgently invited, and the inward thought of which our very countenances betray as by a communion of alarm. In the bold painting of Scripture language, *all faces gather blackness*,—the many at the supposed magnitude of the national embarrassment, the wise at the more certain and far more alarming evil of its moral accompaniments. Peace has come without the advantages expected from peace, and on the contrary, with many of the severest inconveniences usually attributed to war. *We looked for peace, but no good came ; for a time of health, and behold, trouble ! The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.* The

inference therefore contained in the preceding verse is unavoidable. Where war has produced no repentance, and the cessation of war has brought neither concord nor tranquillity, we may safely cry aloud with the prophet: *They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, Peace, when there is no peace:* and proceed to answer the three questions in the answers to which the Prophet instructs us to seek the solution of the problem. First, who are they who have hitherto prescribed for the case, and are still tampering with it? What are their qualifications? What has been their conduct? Second, what is the true seat and source of the complaint,—the ultimate causes as well as the immediate occasions? And lastly, what are the appropriate medicines? Who and where are the true physicians?

First, who are those that have been ever loud and foremost in their pretensions to a knowledge both of the disease and the remedy? The answer to this question is continued in a preceding part of the chapter from which I extracted the text, where the Prophet Isaiah enumerates the conditions of a nation's recovery from a state of depression and peril. *The vile person, he tells us, must no more be called liberal, nor the churl be said to be bountiful. For the vile person will speak villainy, and his heart will work iniquity to practise hypocrisy and to utter*

*error against the Lord ; to make empty the soul of the needy, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail. The instruments also of the churl are evil : he deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poor with lying words, even when the needy speaketh aright. But the liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand. (xxxii. 5, 6, 7, 8.)*

Such are the political empirics, mischievous in proportion to their effrontery and ignorant in proportion to their presumption, the detection and exposure of whose true characters the inspired statesman and patriot represents as indispensable to the re-establishment of the general welfare, while his own portrait of these impostors whom in a former chapter (ix. 15) he calls, *the tail* of the nation, and in the following verse, demagogues *that cause the people to err*, affords to the intelligent believer of all ages and countries the means of detecting them, and of undeceiving all whose own malignant passions have not rendered them blind and deaf and brutish. For these noisy and calumnious zealots, whom (with an especial reference indeed to the factious leaders of the populace who under this name exercised a tumultuary despotism in Jerusalem, at once a sign and a cause of its approaching downfall,) St. John beheld in the Apocalyptic vision \* as a compound of locust and

\* My own conception of this canonical book is, that it

scorpion, are not of one place or of one season. They are the perennials of history: and though they may disappear for a time, they exist always in the egg and need only a distempered atmosphere and an accidental ferment to start up into life and activity.

It is worth our while, therefore, or rather it is our duty to examine with a more attentive eye this representative portrait drawn for us by an infallible master, and to distinguish its component parts each by itself so that we may combine without confusing them in our memory; till they blend at length into one physiognomic expression, which whenever the counterpart is obtruded on our notice in the sphere of our own experience, may be at once recognised, and enable us to convince ourselves

narrates in the broad and inclusive form of the ancient Prophets (that is, in the prophetic power of faith and moral insight irradiated by inspiration), the successive struggles and final triumph of Christianity over the Paganism and Judaism of the then Roman Empire, typified in the fall of Rome, the destruction of the Old and the symbolical descent of the New Jerusalem. Nor do I think its interpretation even in detail attended with any insuperable difficulties.

It was once my intention to have translated the Apocalypse into verse, as a poem, holding a mid place between the epic narrative and the choral drama: and to have annexed a commentary in prose:—an intention long and fondly cherished, but during many years deferred from an unfeigned sense of my deficiency; and now there remains only the hope and the wish, or rather a feeling between both.

of the identity by a comparison of feature with feature.

The passage commences with a fact which to the inexperienced might well seem strange and improbable ; but which being a truth nevertheless of our own knowledge, is, for that very cause, the more striking and characteristic. Worthless persons of little or no estimation for rank, learning, or integrity, not seldom profligates, with whom debauchery has outwrestled rapacity, easy because unprincipled, and generous because dishonest, are suddenly cried up as men of enlarged views and liberal sentiments, our only genuine patriots and philanthropists : and churls, that is, men of sullen tempers and surly demeanour ; men tyrannical in their families, oppressive and troublesome to their dependents and neighbours, and hard in their private dealings between man and man ; men who clench with one hand what they have grasped with the other ; these are extolled as public benefactors, the friends, guardians, and advocates of the poor ! Here and there indeed we may notice an individual of birth and fortune,

(For great estates enlarge not narrow minds)

who has been duped into the ranks of incendiaries and mob-sycophants by an insane restlessness, and the wretched ambition of figuring as the Triton

of the minnows. Or we may find, perhaps, a professional man of showy accomplishments but of a vulgar taste, and shallow acquirements, who in part from vanity, and in part as means of introduction to practice, will seek notoriety by an eloquence well calculated to set the multitude agape, and excite *gratis* to over-acts of sedition or treason which he may afterwards be retained to defend. These however are but exceptions to the general rule. Such as the Prophet has described, such is the sort of men; and in point of historic fact it has been from men of this sort, *that profaneness is gone forth into all the land.* (Jeremiah, xxiii. 15.)

In harmony with the general character of these false prophets are the particular qualities assigned to them. First, a passion for vague and violent invective, an habitual and inveterate predilection for the language of hate, and rage, and contumely, an ungoverned appetite for abuse and defamation. *The vile will talk villainy.*

But the fetid flower will ripen into the poisonous berry, and the fruits of the hand follow the blossoms of the slanderous lips. *His heart will work iniquity.* That is, he will plan evil, and do his utmost to carry his plans into execution. The guilt exists already; and there wants nothing but power and opportunity to condense it into crime and overt act.

*He that hateth his brother is a murderer*, says St. John: and of many and various sorts are the brother-haters, in whom this truth may be exemplified. Most appropriately for our purpose, Isaiah has selected the fratricide of sedition, and with the eagle eye and practised touch of an intuitive demonstrator he unfolds the composition of the character, part by part, in the secret history of the agent's wishes, designs, and attempts, of his ways, his means, and his ends. The agent himself, the incendiary and his kindling combustibles, had been already sketched by Solomon in the rapid yet faithful outline of a master in the art; *The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness and the end of his talk mischievous madness*. (Eccles. x. 13.) If in the spirit of prophecy,\* the wise ruler had been present to our own times, and their procedures; if while he sojourned *in the valley of vision* he had

\* Solomon has himself informed us that beyond wealth and conquest, and as of far greater importance to him, in his arduous office of king and magistrate, he had *sought through knowledge of wisdom to lay hold on folly*;—that is, by the study of man to arrive at a grounded knowledge of men, and through a previous insight into the nature and conditions of good to acquire by inference a thorough comprehension of the evil that arises from its deficiency or perversion. And truly in all points of prudence, public and private, we may accommodate to the royal preacher his own words: (Eccles. ii. 12). *What can the man say that cometh after the King? Even that which hath been said already.*

actually heard the very harangues of our reigning demagogues to the convened populace; could he have more faithfully characterised either the speakers or the speeches? Whether in spoken or in printed addresses, whether in periodical journals or in yet cheaper implements of irritation, the ends are the same, the process is the same, and the same is their general line of conduct. On all occasions,—but most of all and with a more bustling malignity whenever any public distress inclines the lower classes to turbulence, and renders them more apt to be alienated from the government of their country;—in all places and at every opportunity pleading to the poor and ignorant,—no where and at no time are they found actually pleading for them. Nor is this the worst. They even plead against them. Yes!—sycophants to the crowd, enemies of the individuals, and well-wishers only to the continuance of their miseries, they plead against the poor and afflicted, under the weak and wicked pretence that we are to do nothing of what we can, because we cannot do all that we would wish. Or if this sophistry of sloth (*sophisma pigri*) should fail to check the bounty of the rich, there is still the sophistry of slander in reserve to chill the gratitude of the poor. If they cannot dissuade *the liberal from devising liberal things*, they will at least blacken the motives of his beneficence. If they



cannot close the hand of the giver, they will at least embitter the gift in the mouth of the receivers. Is it not as if they had said within their hearts:—“The sacrifice of charity has been offered indeed in despite of us; *but with bitter herbs shall it be eaten!* (Exod. xii. 8.) Imagined wrongs shall make it distasteful. We will infuse vindictive and discontented fancies into minds, already irritable and suspicious from distress: till the fever of the heart shall coat the tongue with gall and spread wormwood on the palate?”

However angrily our demagogues may disclaim all intentions of this kind, such has been their procedure, and it is susceptible of no other interpretation. We all know that the shares must be scanty, where the thing to be divided bears no proportion to the number of the claimants. Yet He, who satisfied a multitude in the wilderness with a few loaves and fishes, is still present to his Church. Small as the portions are, if they are both given and taken in the spirit of his commands, a blessing will go with each; and *the handful of meal shall not fail, until the day when the Lord bringeth back plenty on the land.* But no blessing can enter where envy and hatred are already in possession; and small good will the poor man have of the food prepared for him by his more favoured brother, if he have been previously taught to regard

it as a mess of pottage given to defraud him of his birth-right.

If then to promise medicine and to administer poison; if to flatter in order to deprave; if to affect love to all and show pity to none; if to exaggerate and misderive the distress of the labouring classes in order to make them turbulent, and to discourage every plan for their relief in order to keep them so; if to skulk from private infamy in the mask of public spirit, and make the flaming patriot privilege the gamester, the swindler, or the adulterer; if to seek amnesty for a continued violation of the laws of God by an equal pertinacity in outraging the laws of the land; if these characterise the hypocrite, we need not look far back or far round for faces, wherein to recognise the third striking feature of this prophetic portrait. When, therefore, the verifying facts press upon us in real life; when we hear persons, the tyranny of whose will is the only law in their families, denouncing all law as tyranny in public; persons, whose hatred of power in others is in exact proportion to their love of it for themselves; when we behold men of sunk and irretrievable characters, to whom no man would entrust his wife, his sister, or his purse, having the effrontery to propose that we should entrust to them our religion and our country; when we meet with patriots, who aim

at an enlargement of the rights and liberties of the people by inflaming the populace to acts of madness that necessitate fetters;—pretended heralds of freedom and actual pioneers of military despotism; we will call to mind the words of the prophet Isaiah, and say to ourselves: *This is no new thing under the sun!* We have heard it with our own ears, and it was declared to our fathers, and in the old time before them, that one of the main characteristics of demagogues in all ages is, *to practise hypocrisy.*

Such, I assert, has been the general line of conduct pursued by the political empirics of the day: and your own recent experience will attest the truth of the assertion. It was affirmed likewise at the same time, that as the conduct, such was the process: and I will seek no other support of this charge, I need no better test both of the men and their works, than the plain question: Is there one good feeling to which they do—is there a single bad passion to which they do not—appeal? If they are the enemies of liberty in general, inasmuch as they tend to make it appear incompatible with public quiet and personal safety, still more emphatically are they the enemies of the liberty of the press in particular; and therein of all the truths human and divine which a free press is the most efficient and only commensurate means

of protecting, extending, and perpetuating. The strongest, indeed, the only plausible, arguments against the education of the lower classes are derived from the writings of these incendiaries; and if for our neglect of the light that hath been vouchsafed to us beyond measure, the land should be visited with a spiritual dearth, it will have been in no small degree occasioned by the erroneous and wicked principles which it is the trade of these men to propagate. Well therefore has the Prophet made it the fourth mark of these misleaders of the multitude, not alone *to utter error*, but *to utter error against the Lord, to make empty the soul of the hungry*. Alas! it is a hard and a mournful thing that the press should be constrained to call out for the harsh curb of the law against the press. For how shall the law predistinguish the ominous scritch owl from the sacred notes of augury, from the auspicious and friendly birds of warning? And yet will we avoid this seeming injustice, we throw down all fence and bulwark of public decency and public opinion. Already has political calumny joined hands with private slander, and every principle, every feeling, that binds the citizen to his country, the spirit to his Creator, is in danger of being undermined. Not by reasoning,—for from that there is no danger; but by the mere habit of hearing them reviled and scoffed at with

impunity. Were we to contemplate the evils of a rank and unweeded press only in its effects on the manners of the people, and on the general tone of thought and conversation, the greater love we bore to literature, and to all the means and instruments of human improvement, the more anxiously should we wish for some Ithuriel spear that might remove from the ear of the ignorant and half-learned, and expose in their own fiendish shape, those reptiles, which inspiring venom and forging illusions as they list,

————— thence raise,  
At least distemper'd discontented thoughts,  
Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires.

I feel, my friends! that even the strong and painful interest which the peculiar state of the times, and almost the occurrences of the hour create, can scarcely counterbalance the wearisome aversion inspired by the deformity and palpableness of the subject itself. As the plan originates in the malignant restlessness of desperate ambition or desperate circumstances, so are its means and engines a drag-net of fraud and delusion. *The instruments also of the churl are evil, he deviseth wicked devices with lying words.* He employs a compound poison, of which the following are the main ingredients, the proportions varying as the case requires, or the wit of the prisoner suggests.

It will be enough rapidly to name and number the components, as in a catalogue. 1. Bold, warm, and earnest assertions, it matters not whether supported by facts or not, nay, though they should involve absurdities and demonstrable impossibilities ; as for example, that the amount of the sinecure places given by the executive power would suffice to remove all distress from the land. He is a bungler in the trade, and has been an indocile scholar of his dark master, the father of lies, who cannot make an assertion pass for a fact with an ignorant multitude. The natural generosity of the human heart which makes it an effort to doubt, the confidence which apparent courage inspires, and the contagion of animal enthusiasm, will insure the belief. Even in large assemblies of men highly educated it is too often sufficient to place impressive images in juxta-position ; and the constitutive forms of the mind itself aided by the power of habit will supply the rest. For we all think by casual connections. 2. Startling particular facts, which, dissevered from their context, enable a man to convey falsehood while he says truth. 3. Arguments built on passing events and deriving an undue importance from the feelings of the moment. The mere appeal, however, to the auditors whether the arguments are not such that none but an idiot or a hireling could resist, is an effective substitute for

any argument at all. For mobs have no memories. They are in nearly the same state as that of an individual when he makes (what is termed) a bull. The passions, like a fused metal, fill up the wide interstices of thought, and supply the defective links : and thus incompatible assertions are harmonised by the sensation, without the sense, of connection. 4. The display of defects without the accompanying advantages, or *vice versa*. 5. Concealment of the general and ultimate result behind the scenery of local and particular consequences. 6. Statement of positions that are true only under particular conditions, to men whose ignorance or fury make them forget that these conditions are not present, or lead them to take for granted that they are. 7. Chains of questions, especially of such questions as the persons best authorised to propose are ever the slowest in proposing ; and objections, intelligible of themselves, the answers to which require the comprehension of a system. 8. Vague and common-place satire, stale as the wine in which flies were drowned last summer, seasoned by the sly tale and important anecdote of yesterday, that came within the speaker's own knowledge ! 9. Transitions from the audacious charge, not seldom of as signal impudence "as any thing was ever carted for," to the lie pregnant and interpretative : the former to prove the orator's

courage, and that he is neither to be bought, nor frightened; the latter to flatter the sagacity of the audience.

——— δῆλός ἐστιν αὐτόθεν·

Ἐν πανουργίᾳ τε καὶ θράσει καὶ κοβαλικεύμασιν.

10. Jerks of style, from the lunatic trope, *ρήμαθ' ἱπποβάμονα*, *πολλὰς τε ἁλιωδῆθρας ἐπῶν*, to the buffoonery and "red-lattice phrases" of the *canaglia*, *σκῶρ συσκεδῶν βόρβορον τε πόλυν καὶ κακίας καὶ συκοφαντίας*; the one in ostentation of superior rank and acquirements (for where envy does not interfere, man loves to look up;) the other in pledge of heartiness and good fellowship. 11. Lastly, and throughout all, to leave a general impression of something striking, something that is to come of it, and to rely on the indolence of men's understandings and the activity of their passions for their resting in this state, as the brood-warmth fittest to hatch whatever serpents' egg opportunity may enable the deceiver to place under it. Let but mysterious expressions\* be aided by significant looks and tones, and you may cajole a hot and ignorant audience to believe anything by saying nothing, and finally to act on the lie which they

\* Vide North's *Examen*, p. 20; and The Knights of Aristophanes. A version of this comedy, abridged and modernised, would be a most seasonable present to the public. The words quoted above from his play and The



themselves have been drawn in to make. This is the *pharmacopœia* of political empirics, here and everywhere, now and at all times. These are the drugs administered, and the tricks played off by the mountebanks and zanies of patriotism; drugs that will continue to poison as long as irreligion secures a predisposition to their influence; and artifices that, like stratagems in war, are never the less successful for having succeeded a hundred times before. *They bend their tongues as a bow: they shoot out deceits as arrows: they are prophets of the deceit of their own hearts: they cause the people to err by their dreams and their lightness: they make the people vain, they feed them with wormwood, they give them the water of gall for drink; and the people love to have it so. And what is the end thereof?* (JEREM. *passim*.)

Isaiah answers for me in the concluding words of the description;—*To destroy the poor even when the needy speaketh aright*; that is, to impel them to acts that must end in their ruin by inflammatory falsehoods, and by working on their

Frogs, may be rendered freely in the order in which they occur: thus,

1. Thence he is illustrious, as a man of all waters, a bold fellow, and one who knows how to tickle the populace.
2. Phrases on horseback, curvetting and careering words.
3. Scattering filth and dirt, malice and sycophantic tales.

passions till they lead them to reject the prior convictions of their own sober and unsophisticated understandings. As in all the preceding features so in this, with which the prophetic portrait is completed, our own experience supplies both proof and example. The ultimate causes of the present distress and stagnation are in my opinion complex and deeply seated; but the immediate occasion is too obvious to be over-looked but by eyes at once red and dim through the intoxication of factious prejudice, that maddening spirit which pre-eminently deserves the title of *vinum demonum* applied by an ancient Father of the Church to a far more innocent phrenzy. It is demonstrable that taxes, the product of which is circulated in the country from which they are raised, can never injure a country directly by the mere amount; but either from the time or circumstances under which they are raised, or from the injudicious mode in which they are levied, or from the improper objects to which they are applied. The sun may draw up the moisture from the river, the morass, and the ocean, to be given back in genial showers to the garden, the pasture and the cornfield; but it may likewise force upward the moisture from the fields of industry to drop it on the stagnant pool, the saturated swamp, or the unprofitable sandwaste. The corruptions of a system can be duly appreciated

by those only who have contemplated the system in that ideal state of perfection exhibited by the reason; the nearest possible approximation to which under existing circumstances it is the business of the prudential understanding to realise. Those, on the other hand, who commence the examination of a system by identifying it with its abuses or imperfections, degrade their understanding into the pander of their passions, and are sure to prescribe remedies more dangerous than the disease. Alas! there are so many real evils, so many just causes of complaint in the constitutions and administration of all governments, our own not excepted, that it becomes the imperious duty of the true patriot to prevent, as much as in him lies, the feelings and efforts of his fellow-country-men from losing themselves on a wrong scent.

If then we are to master the ideal of a beneficent and judicious system of finance as the preliminary to all profitable insight into the defects of any particular system in actual existence, we could not perhaps find an apter illustration than the gardens of southern Europe would supply. The tanks or reservoirs would represent the capital of a nation; while the hundred rills hourly varying their channels and directions under the gardener's spade would give a pleasing image of the dispersion of that capital through the whole population by the

joint effect of taxation and trade. For taxation itself is a part of commerce, and the Government may be fairly considered as a great manufacturing-house, carrying on in different places, by means of its partners and overseers, the trades of the ship-builder, the clothier, the iron-founder, and the like. As long as a balance is preserved between the receipts and the returns of Government in their amount, quickness, and degree of dispersion; as long as the due proportion obtains in the sums levied to the mass in productive circulation, so long does the wealth and circumstantial prosperity of the nation,—(its wealth, I say, not its real welfare; its outward prosperity, but not necessarily its happiness)—remain unaffected, or rather they will appear to increase in consequence of the additional *stimulus* given to the circulation itself by the reproductive action of all large capitals, and through the check which taxation, in its own nature, gives to the indolence of the wealthy in its continual transfer of property to the industrious and enterprising. If different periods be taken, and if the comparative weight of the taxes at each be calculated, as it ought to be, not by the sum levied on each individual, but by the sum left in his possession, the settlement of the account will be in favour of the national wealth, to the amount of all the additional productive labour sustained or

excited by the taxes during the intervals between their afflux and their re-absorption.

But on the other hand, in a direct *ratio* to this increase will be the distress produced by the disturbance of this balance, by the loss of this proportion; and the operation of the distress will be at least equal to the total amount of the difference between the taxes still levied, and the *quantum* of aid withdrawn from individuals by the abandonment of others, not overlooking the further quantum, which the taxes, that still remain, have ceased to give by the altered mode of their redistribution. But to this we must add the number of persons raised and reared in consequence of the demand created by the preceding state of things, and now discharged from their occupations: whether the latter belong exclusively to the executive power, as that of soldiers and the like, or from those in which the labourers for the nation in general are already sufficiently numerous. Both these classes are thrown back on the public, and sent to a table where every seat is pre-occupied. The employment lessens as the number of men to be employed is increased; and not merely in the same, but from additional causes and from the indirect consequences of those already stated, in a far greater *ratio*. For it may easily happen, that the very same change, which had produced this depression at home, may

from equivalent causes have embarrassed the countries in commercial connection with us. At one and the same time the great customer at home wants less, and our customers abroad are able to buy less. The conjoint action of these circumstances will furnish, for a mind capable of combining them, a sufficient solution of the melancholy fact. They cannot but occasion much distress, much obstruction, and these again in their re-action are sure to be more than doubled by the still greater and universal alarm, and by the consequent check of confidence and enterprise, which they never fail to produce.

Now it is a notorious fact, that these causes did all exist to a very extraordinary degree, and that they all worked with united strength, in the late sudden transition from war to peace. It was one among the many anomalies of the late war, that it acted, after a few years, as a universal stimulant. We almost monopolised the commerce of the world. The high wages of our artizans and the high prices of agricultural produce intercirculated. Leases of no unusual length not seldom enabled the provident and thrifty farmer to purchase the estate he had rented. Every where might be seen roads, railways, docks, canals, made, making, and projected; villages swelling into towns, while the metropolis surrounded itself, and became (as it were) set with

new cities. Finally, in spite of all the waste and havock of a twenty years' war the population of the empire was increased by more than two millions. The efforts and war expenditure of the nation, and the yearly revenue, were augmented in the same proportion: and to all this we must add a fact of the utmost importance in the present question, that the war did not, as was usually the case in former wars, die away into a long expected peace by gradual exhaustion and weariness on both sides, but plunged to its conclusion by a concentration, we might almost say, by a spasm of energy, and consequently by an anticipation of our resources. We conquered by compelling revolutionary power into alliance with our existing and natural strength. The first intoxication of triumph having passed over, this our agony of glory was succeeded of course by a general stiffness, and relaxation. The antagonist passions came into play; financial solicitude was blended with constitutional and political jealousies, and both, alas! were exacerbated by personal imprudences, the chief injury of which consisted in their own tendency to disgust and alienate the public feeling. And with all this, the financial errors and prejudices even of the more educated classes, in short, the general want or imperfection of clear views and a scientific insight into the true effects and

influences of taxation, and the mode of its operation, became now a real misfortune, and opened an additional source of temporary embarrassment. Retrenchment could no longer proceed by cautious and calculated steps; but was compelled to hurry forward, like one who crossing the sands at too late an hour finds himself threatened by the inrush of the tide. Nevertheless, it was a truth susceptible of little less than mathematical demonstration, that the more, and the more suddenly, the revenue was diminished by the abandonment of the war-taxes, the greater would be the disturbance of the balance:\* so that the agriculturist, the manu-

\* The disturbance of this balance may be illustrated thus:—Suppose a great capitalist to have founded in a large market-town a factory that gradually increasing employed at length from five to six hundred workmen; and that he had likewise a second factory at a distance from the former (in the Isle of Man for instance) employing half that number, all of the latter having been drafted from and still belonging to the first parish. After some years we may further suppose that a large proportion of the housekeepers and tradespeople might have a running account with the capitalist, many with him, as being their landlord, and still more for their stock. The workmen would in like manner be for the greater part on the books of the tradesfolks. As long as this state of things continued, all would go on well;—nay, the town would be more prosperous with every increase of the factory. The balance is preserved. The circulations counterpoise each other, or rather they are neutralized by interfluence. But some sudden event leads or compels the capitalist to put down both factories at once and with little or no



facturer, or the tradesman,—(all in short but annuitants and fixed stipendiaries)—who during the war having paid as five had fifteen left behind, would shortly have less than ten after having paid but two and a half. What then the pressure on the country must be, when we add to the above the operation of the return to cash payments, without any change made in the intrinsic value of the coin, and so as in effect to reimpose the amount of taxes, nominally remitted, may be easily understood.

But there is yet another circumstance, which I must not pass by unnoticed. In the best of times

warning ; and to call in all the monies owing to him, and which by law, we will suppose, had the preference to all other debts. What would be the consequence? The workmen are no longer employed, and cannot at once pay up their arrears to the tradesmen ; and though the capitalist should furnish the latter with goods at half price, and make the same abatement in their rent, these deductions would afford little present relief : while, in the mean time, the discharged workmen from the distant factory would fall back on the parish, and increase the general distress. The balance is disturbed. Put the country at large for the parishioners, and the Government in all departments of expenditure for the capitalist and his factories : and nearly such is the situation in which we are placed by the transition from the late war to the present peace. But the difference is this. The town may never recover its temporary prosperity, and the capitalist may spend his remaining fortune in another county ; but a nation, of which the Government is an organic part with perfect interdependence of interests, can never remain in a state of depression thus produced, but by its own fault : that is, from moral causes.

—or what the world calls such—the spirit of commerce will occasion great fluctuations, some falling while others rise, and therefore in all times there will be a large sum of individual distress. Trades likewise have their seasons, consequently even in the most flourishing period there will be a very considerable number of artificers who are not employed on the average more than seven or eight months in the year: and the distress from this cause is great or small in proportion to the greater or less degree of dissipation and improvidence prevailing among them. But besides this, that artificial life and vigour of trade and agriculture, which was produced or occasioned by the direct or indirect influences of the late war, proved by no means innoxious in its effects. Habit and the familiarity with outward advantages, which takes off their dazzle; sense of character; and above all, the counterpoise of intellectual pursuits and resources; are all necessary preventives and antidotes to the dangerous properties of wealth and power with the great majority of mankind. It is a painful subject: and I leave to your own experience and recollection the assemblage of folly, presumption, and extravagance, that followed in the procession of our late unprecedented prosperity; the blind practices and blending passions of speculation in the commercial world, with the

shoal of ostentatious fooleries and sensual vices which the sudden influx of wealth let in on our farmers and yeomanry. Now though the whole mass of calamity consequent on these aberrations from prudence should in all fairness be attributed to the sufferer's own conduct; yet when there supervenes some one common cause or occasion of distress which pressing hard on many furnishes a pretext to all, this too will pass muster among its actual effects, and assume the semblance and dignity of national calamity. Each unfortunate individual shares during the hard times in the immunities of a privileged order, as the most tottering and ruinous houses equally with those in best repair are included in the same brief after an extensive fire. The change of the moon will not produce a change of weather, except in places where the atmosphere has from local and particular causes been predisposed to its influence. But the former is one, placed aloft and conspicuous to all men; the latter are many and intricate, and known to few. Of course it is the moon that must bear the entire blame of wet summers and scanty crops. All these, however, whether they are distresses common to all times alike, or though occasioned by the general revolution and stagnation, yet really caused by personal improvidence or misconduct, combine with its peculiar and inevitable effects in

making the cup overflow. The latter class especially, as being in such cases always the most clamorous sufferers, increase the evil by swelling the alarm.

The main causes of the present exigencies are so obvious, and lie so open to the common sense of mankind, that the labouring classes saw the connection of the change in the times with the suddenness of the peace, as clearly as their superiors; nay, being less heated with speculation, they were in the first instance less surprised at the results. To a public event of universal concern there will often be more attributed than belongs to it; but never in the natural course of human feelings will there be less. That the depression began with the peace would have been of itself a sufficient proof with the many that it arose from the peace. But this opinion suited ill with the purposes of sedition. The truth, that could not be precluded, must be removed: and *when the needy speaketh aright*, the more urgent occasion is there for the *wicked device* and the lying words. Where distress is felt, tales of wrong and oppression are readily believed, to the sufferer's own disquiet. Rage and revenge make the cheek pale and the hand tremble worse than even want itself: and the cup of sorrow overflows by being held unsteadily. On the other hand nothing calms the mind in the hour of bitterness so efficaciously as the conviction

that it was not within the means of those above us, or around us to have prevented it. An influence, mightier than fascination, dwells in the stern eye of necessity, when it is fixed steadily on a man: for together with the power of resistance it takes away its agitations likewise. This is one mercy that always accompanies the visitations of the Almighty when they are received as such. If therefore the sufferings of the lower classes are to supply air and fuel to their passions, and are to be perverted into instruments of mischief, they must be attributed to causes that can be represented as removable; either to individuals who have been previously rendered unpopular, or to whole classes of men, accordingly as the immediate object of their seducers may require. What, though nothing should be more remote from the true cause? What, though the invidious charge should be not only without proof, but in the face of strong proof to the contrary? What, though the pretended remedy should have no possible end but that of exasperating the disease? All will be of little or no avail if these truths have not been administered beforehand. When *the wrath is gone forth the plague is already begun. Wrath is cruel*, and where is there a deafness like that of an outrageous multitude? *For as the matter of fire is, so it burneth.* Let the demagogue but succeed in

maddening the crowd, he may bid defiance to demonstration, and direct the madness against whom it pleaseth him. *A slanderous tongue has disquieted many, and driven them from nation to nation; strong cities hath it pulled down and overthrown the houses of great men.* (Ecclus. xxviii. 14.)

We see in every promiscuous public meeting the effect produced by the bold assertion that the present hardships of all classes are owing to the number and amount of pensions and sinecures. Yet from the unprecedented zeal and activity in the education \* of the poor, of the thousands that

\* With all due humility we contended that the war in question had likewise its golden side. The anomalous occasions and stupendous events of the contest had roused us, like the blast of a trumpet from the clouds; and as many as were capable of thinking were roused to thought. It had forced on the higher and middle classes—say, rather on the people at large, as distinguished from the mere populace—the home truth, that national honesty and individual safety, private morals and public security, mutually grounded each other, that they inosculated at the very root, and could not grow or thrive but in intertwine: and we of Great Britain had acquired this instruction without the stupifying influences of terror or actual calamity. Yet that it had operated practically, and in a scale proportional to the magnitude of the occasion, the late and present condition of manners and intellect among the young men at Oxford and Cambridge, the manly sobriety of demeanor, the submission to the routine of study in almost all, and the zeal in the pursuit of knowledge and academic distinction in a large and increasing

are inflamed by, and therefore give credit to, these statements, there are few without a child at home, who could prove their impossibility by the first and

number, afford a cheering testimony to such as were familiar with the state of the two Universities forty or even thirty years ago, with the moral contrast which they presented, at the close of the last, and during the former half of the present reign ; while a proof of still greater power, and open to the observation of all men, is supplied by the predominant anxiety concerning the education and principles of their children in all the respectable classes of the community, and the unexampled sale, in consequence, of the very numerous large and small volumes composed or compiled for the use of parents. Nor here did the salutary influence stop. We had been compelled to know and feel that the times in which we had to act or suffer were the *Saturnalia* of revolution ; and fearful evidence had been given us at the cost of our unfortunate neighbours, that a vicious and ignorant population was a magazine of combustibles left roofless, while madmen and incendiaries were letting off their new invented blue lights and fire-rockets in every direction. The wish sprang up and spread throughout England that every Englishman should be able to read his Bible, and have a Bible of his own to read. The general wish organised itself into act and plan : a discovery, the living educt of one man's genius and benevolence, rendered the execution practicable and even easy ; and the god-like idea began and is proceeding to realise itself with a rapidity yet steadfastness, which nothing could make possible or credible, but such a conviction effected by an experience so strange and awful, and acting on that volunteer spirit, that instinct of fervid yet orderly co-operation, which most of all our honourable characteristics distinguishes, secures, enriches, strengthens and elevates the people of Great Britain. [*From an Essay published in the Courier, July, 1816.*]

simplest rules of arithmetic; there is not one, perhaps, who, taken by himself and in a cooler mood, would stand out against the simple question, —whether it was not folly to suppose that the lowness of his wages or his want of employment could be occasioned by the circumstance, that a sum (the whole of which, as far as it is raised by taxation, cannot take a yearly penny from him) was dispersed and returned into the general circulation by annuitants of the Treasury instead of annuitants of the Bank, by John instead of Peter; however blameable the regulation might be in other respects? What then? the *hypothesis* allows of a continual reference to persons, and to all the uneasy and malignant passions which personalities are of all means the best fitted to awaken. The grief itself, however grinding it may be, is of no avail to this end; it must first be converted into a grievance. Were the audience composed chiefly of the lower farmers and the peasantry, the same circumstance would for the same reason have been attributed wholly to the Clergy and the system of tithes; as if the corn would be more plentiful if the farmers paid their whole rent to one man, instead of paying nine parts to the landlords and the tenth to the tithe-owners! But let the meeting be composed of the manufacturing poor, and then it is the machinery



of their employers that is devoted to destruction : though it would not exceed the truth if I affirmed, that to the use and perfection of this very machinery the majority of the poor deluded destroyers owe their very existence, owe to it that they ever beheld the light of heaven !

Even so it is with the capitalists and store-keepers, who by spreading the dearness of provisions over a larger space and time prevent scarcity from becoming real famine, the frightful lot at certain and not distant intervals of our less commercial forefathers. These men by the mere instinct of self-interest are not alone birds of warning, that prevent waste ; but as the raven of Elijah, they bring supplies from afar. But let the incendiary spirit have rendered them birds of ill omen : and it is well if the deluded malcontents can be restrained from levelling at them missiles more alarming than the curse of the unwise that alighteth not. *There be three things* (says the wise son of Sirach) *that mine heart feareth, the slander of a city, the gathering together of an unruly multitude, and a false accusation : all these are worse than death.* But all these are the arena, and the chosen weapons of demagogues. Wretches ! they would without remorse detract the hope which is the subliming and expanding warmth of public credit, destroy the public credit which is the vital

air of national industry, convert obstruction into stagnation, and make grass grow in the exchange and the market-place; if so they might but goad ignorance into riot, and fanaticism into rebellion! They would snatch the last morsel from the poor man's lips to make him curse the Government in his heart—alas! to fall at length, either ignominiously beneath the strength of the outraged law, or (if God in his anger, and for the punishment of general depravity, should require a severer and more extensive retribution) to perish still more lamentably among the victims of its weakness.

Thus then, I have answered at large to the first of the three questions proposed as the heads and divisions of this address. I am well aware that our demagogues are not the only empirics who have tampered with the case. But I felt unwilling to put the mistakes of sciolism, or even those of vanity and self-interest, in the same section with crime and guilt. What is omitted here will find its place elsewhere; the more readily, that having been tempted by the foulness of the ways to turn for a short space out of my direct path, I have encroached already on the second question; that, namely, which respects the ultimate causes and immediate occasions of the complaint.

The latter part of this problem I appear to myself to have solved fully and satisfactorily. To

those who deem any further or deeper research superfluous, I must content myself with observing, that I have never heard it denied that there is more than a sufficiency of food in existence. I have, at least, met with no proof that there is or has been any scarcity, either in the materials of all necessary comforts, or any lack of strength, skill and industry to prepare them. If we saw a man in health pining at a full table because there was not *the savory meat there which he loved*, and had expected, the wanton delay or negligence of the messenger would be a complete answer to our inquiries after the occasion of this sullenness or inappetence: but the cause of it we should be tempted to seek in the man's own undisciplined temper, or habits of self-indulgence. So far from agreeing therefore with those who find the causes in the occasions, I think the half of the question already solved of very unequal importance with that which yet remains for solution.

The immediate occasions of the existing distress may be correctly given with no greater difficulty than would attend any other series of known historic facts; but toward the discovery of its true seat and sources, I can but offer a humble contribution. They appear to me, however, resolvable into the *overbalance\* of the commercial spirit*

\* I entreat attention to the word over-balance. My

*in consequence of the absence or weakness of the counter-weights*: this overbalance considered as displaying itself, 1. in the commercial world itself: 2. in the agricultural: 3. in the Government: and, 4. in the combined influence of all three on the more numerous and labouring classes.

Of the natural counter-forces to the *impetus* of trade, the first that presents itself to my mind, is the ancient feeling of rank and ancestry, compared with our present self-complacent triumph over these supposed prejudices. Not that titles and the rights of precedence are pursued by us with less eagerness than they were pursued by our forefathers. The contrary is the case; and for this very cause, because they inspire less reverence. In the old times they were valued by the possessors

opinions would be greatly misinterpreted if I were supposed to think hostilely of the spirit of commerce to which I attribute the largest proportion of our actual freedom, and at least as large a share of our virtues as of our vices. Still more anxiously would I guard against the suspicion of a design to inculcate any number or class of individuals. It is not in the power of a minister or of a cabinet to say to the current of national tendency, Stay here! or, Flow there! The excess can only be remedied by the slow progress of intellect, the influences of religion, and irresistible events guided by Providence. In the points, even, which I have presumed to blame, by the word Government I intend all the directors of political power, that is, the great estates of the realm, temporal and spiritual, and not only the Parliament, but all the elements of Parliament.

and revered by the people as distinctions of nature, which the Crown itself could only ornament, but not give. Like the stars in heaven, their influence was wider and more general, because for the mass of mankind there was no hope of reaching, and therefore no desire to appropriate, them. That many evils as well as advantages accompanied this state of things I am well aware: and likewise that many of the latter have become incompatible with far more important blessings. It would therefore be sickly affectation to suspend the thankfulness due for our immunity from the one in an idle regret for the loss of the other. But however true this may be, and whether the good or the evil preponderated, still, this reverence for ancients in families acted as a counterpoise to the grosser superstition of wealth. Of the efficiency of this counter-influence I can offer negative proof only: and for this we need only look back on the deplorable state of Holland in respect of patriotism and public spirit at and before the commencement of the French Revolution.

The limits and proportions of this address allow little more than a bare reference to this point. The same restraint I must impose on myself in the following. For under this head I include the general neglect of all the austerer studies: the long and ominous eclipse of philosophy; the

usurpation of that venerable name by physical and psychological empiricism; and the non-existence of a learned and philosophic public, which is perhaps the only innoxious form of an *imperium in imperio*, but at the same time the only form which is not directly or indirectly encouraged. So great a risk do I incur of malignant interpretation, and the assertion itself is so likely to appear paradoxical even to men of candid minds, that I should have passed over this point, most important as I know it to be; but that it will be found stated more at large, with all its proofs, in a work on the point of publication. The fact is simply this. We have—lovers, shall I entitle them?—or must I not rather hazard the introduction of their own phrases, and say, *amateurs* or *dilettanti*, as musicians, botanists, florists, mineralogists, and antiquarians? Nor is it denied that these are ingenuous pursuits, and such as become men of rank and fortune. Neither in these or in other points do I complain of any excess in the pursuits themselves; but of that which arises from the deficiency of the counterpoise. The effect is the same. Every work, which can be made use of either to immediate profit or immediate pleasure, every work which falls in with the desire of acquiring wealth suddenly, or which can gratify the senses, or pamper the still more degrading appetite for scandal and personal defamation, is

snre of an appropriate circulation. But neither philosophy or theology in the strictest sense of the words, can be said to have even a public existence among us. I feel assured that if Plato himself were to return and renew his sublime lucubrations in the metropolis of Great Britain, a handicraftsman from a laboratory, who had just succeeded in disoxydating an earth,—*silex*, or lime, for instance,—would be thought the more respectable, nay, the more illustrious person of the two. Nor will it be the least drawback from his honours, that he had never even asked himself, what law of universal being nature uttered in this *phenomenon* : while the character of a visionary would be the sole remuneration of the man, who from his insight into that law had previously demonstrated the necessity of the fact. As to that which passes with us under the name of metaphysics, philosophic elements, and the like, I refer every man of reflection to the contrast between the present times and those shortly after the restoration of ancient literature. In the latter we find the greatest men of the age, statesmen, warriors, monarchs, architects in closest intercourse with philosophy. I need only mention the names of Lorenzo the Magnificent, Picus Mirandola, Ficinus and Politian ; the abstruse subjects of their discussion, and the importance attached to them, as the requisite qualifications of

men placed by Providence as guides and governors of their fellow-creatures. If this be undeniable, equally notorious is it that at present the more effective a man's talents are, and the more likely he is to be useful and distinguished in the highest situations of public life, the earlier does he show his aversion to the metaphysics and the books of metaphysical speculation, which are placed before him : though they come with the recommendation of being so many triumphs of modern good sense over the schools of ancient philosophy. Dante, Petrarch, Spenser, Philip and Algernon Sidney, Milton and Barrow were Platonists. But all the men of genius, with whom it has been my fortune to converse, either profess to know nothing of the present systems, or to despise them. It would be equally unjust and irrational to seek the solution of this difference in the men ; and if not, it can be found only in the philosophic systems themselves. And so in truth it is. The living of former ages communed gladly with a life-breathing philosophy : the living of the present age wisely leave the dead to take care of the dead.

But whatever the causes may be, the result is before our eyes. An excess in our attachment to temporal and personal objects can be counteracted only by a pre-occupation of the intellect and the affections with permanent, universal, and eternal



truths. Let no man enter, said Plato, who has not previously disciplined his mind by geometry.\* He considered this science as the first purification of the soul, by abstracting the attention from the accidents of the senses. We too teach geometry ; but that there may be no danger of the pupil's becoming too abstract in his conceptions, it has been not only proposed, but the proposal has been adopted, that it should be taught by wooden diagrams. It pains me to remember with what applause a work, that placed the inductions of modern chemistry in the same rank with the demonstrations of mathematical science, was received even in a mathematical University.

That my complaints, both in this and in my former Lay Sermon, concerning the same errors, are not grounded on any peculiar notions of mine, the following remarks of a great and good man, not less illustrious for his piety and fervent zeal as a Christian, than for his acuteness and profundity as a philosopher, may, perhaps, be accepted as proof.

"Prevailing studies," he observes, "are of no small consequence to a state, the religion, manners, and civil government of a country ever taking some bias from its philosophy, which affects not only the minds of its professors and students, but also the opinions of all the better sort, and the practice of

\* Οὐδεὶς ἀγεωμέτρητος εἰσέλτω.—*Ed.*

the whole people, remotely and consequentially, indeed, though not inconsiderably. Have not the doctrines of necessity and materialism, with the consequent denial of man's responsibility, of his corrupt and fallen nature, and of the whole scheme of Redemption by the incarnate Word gained ground during the general passion for the corpuscularian and experimental philosophy which hath prevailed about a century? This indeed might usefully enough have employed some share of the leisure and curiosity of inquisitive persons. But when it entered the seminaries of learning, as a necessary accomplishment and as the most important part of knowledge, by engrossing men's thoughts and fixing their minds so much on corporeal objects, it hath, however undesignedly, not a little indisposed them for spiritual, moral, and intellectual matters. Certainly, had the philosophy of Pythagoras and Socrates prevailed in this age, we should not have seen interest take so general and fast hold on the minds of men. But while the employment of the mind on things purely intellectual is to most men irksome, whereas the sensitive powers by our constant use of them, acquire strength, the objects of sense are too often counted the chief good. For these things men fight, cheat, and scramble. Therefore, in order to tame mankind and introduce a sense of virtue,

the best human means is to exercise their understanding, to give them a glimpse of a world superior to the sensible; and while they take pains to cherish and maintain the animal life, to teach them not to neglect the intellectual.

“It might very well be thought serious trifling to tell my readers that the greatest men had ever a high esteem for Plato; whose writings are the touchstone of a hasty and shallow mind; whose philosophy, the admiration of ages, supplied patriots, magistrates, and lawgivers to the most flourishing states, as well as Fathers to the Church, and Doctors to the Schools. In these days the depths of that old learning are rarely fathomed: and yet it were happy for these lands, if our young nobility and gentry instead of modern maxims would imbibe the notions of the great men of antiquity. But in this free-thinking time, many an empty head is shook at Aristotle and Plato: and the writings of these celebrated ancients are by most men treated on a level with the dry and barbarous lucubrations of the Schoolmen. It may, however, be modestly presumed that there are not many among us, even of those that are called the better sort, who have more sense, virtue, and love of their country than Cicero, who in a letter to Atticus could not forbear exclaiming, *O Socrates et Socratici viri! nunquam vobis gratiam referam.* Would to

God, many of our countrymen had the same obligations to those Socratic writers! Certainly, where the people are well educated, the art of piloting a state is best learnt from the writings of Plato. But among a people void of discipline and a gentry devoted to vulgar cares and views, Plato, Pythagoras, and Aristotle themselves, were they living, could do but little good.”\*

I must not permit myself to say more on this subject, desirous as I am of showing the importance of a philosophic class, and of evincing that it is of vital utility, and even an essential element in the composition of a civilised community. It must suffice, that it has been explained in what respect the pursuit of truth for its own sake, and the reverence yielded to its professors, has a tendency to calm or counteract the pursuit of wealth; and that therefore a counterforce is wanting wherever philosophy is degraded in the estimation of society. “What are you (a philosopher was once asked) in consequence of your admiration of these abstruse speculations?” He answered: “What I am, it does not become me to say; but what thousands are, who despise them, and even pride themselves on their ignorance, I see—and tremble!”

There is a third influence, alternately our spur and our curb, without which all the pursuits and

\* Bishop Berkley's *Siris*, sec. 331-2, slightly adapted.

desires of man must either exceed or fall short of their just measure. Need I add, that I mean the influence of religion? I speak of that sincere, that entire interest, in the undivided faith of Christ which demands the first-fruits of the whole man, his affections no less than his outward acts, his understanding equally with his feelings. For be assured, never yet did there exist a full faith in the divine Word, (by whom not immortality alone, but light and immortality were brought into the world) which did not expand the intellect while it purified the heart; which did not multiply the aims and objects of the mind, while it fixed and simplified those of the desires and passions. If acquiescence without insight; if warmth without light; if an immunity from doubt given and guaranteed by a resolute ignorance; if the habit of taking for granted the words of a catechism, remembered or forgotten; if a sensation of positiveness substituted—I will not say, for certainty, but—for that calm assurance, the very means and conditions of which it supersedes; if a belief that seeks the darkness, and yet strikes no root, immovable as the limpet from its rock, and like the limpet fixed there by mere force of adhesion;—if these suffice to make us Christians, in what intelligible sense could our Lord have announced it as the height and consummation of the signs and miracles which attested his Divinity,

that *the Gospel was preached to the poor*? In what sense could the Apostle affirm that believers have received, not indeed the wisdom of this world that comes to nought, but the wisdom of God, that we might know and comprehend the things that are freely given to us of God? or that every Christian, in proportion as he is indeed a Christian, has received the Spirit that searcheth all things, yea, *the deep things of God himself*?—On what grounds could the Apostle denounce even the sincerest fervour of spirit as defective, where it does not bring forth fruits in the understanding? \* Or again: if to believe were enough, why are we commanded by another Apostle, that, *besides this, giving all diligence we should add to our faith manly energy and to manly energy knowledge*? (2 Pet. i. 5.) Is it not especially significant, that in the divine economy, as revealed to us in the New Testament, the peculiar office of Redemption is attributed to the Word, that is, to the intellectual wisdom which from all eternity is with God, and is God; that in Him is life, and the life is the light of men?

In the present day we hear much, and from men of various creeds, of the plainness and simplicity of the Christian religion: and a strange abuse has

\* Brethren! be not children in understanding: howbeit, in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.

been made of these words, often indeed with no ill intention, but still oftener by men who would fain transform the necessity of believing in Christ into a recommendation to believe him. The advocates of the latter scheme grew out of a sect that were called Socinians, but having succeeded in disbelieving far beyond the last foot-marks of the Socini, have chosen to designate themselves by the name of Unitarians. But this is a name, which in its proper sense, can belong only to their antagonists : for unity or union, and indistinguishable unicity or sameness, are incompatible terms : while, in the exclusive sense in which they mean the name to be understood, it is a presumptuous boast, and an uncharitable calumny. Their true designation, which simply expresses a fact admitted on all sides, would be that of Psilanthrophists,\* or assertors of the mere humanity of Christ. It is the interest of these to speak of the Christian religion as comprised in a few plain doctrines, and containing

\* New things justify new terms. *Novis in rebus licet nova nobis verba confingere.*—We never speak of the unity of attraction, or of the unity of repulsion ; but of the unity of attraction and repulsion in each one corpuscle. The essential diversity of the ideas, unity and sameness, was among the elementary principles of the old logicians ; and the sophisms grounded on the confusion of these terms have been ably exposed by Leibnitz, in his critique on Wissowatius, the acutest, perhaps, of all the learned Socinian divines, when Socinian divines were undeniably men of learning.

nothing not intelligible, at the first hearing, to men of the narrowest capacities. Well then, (it might be replied) we are disposed to place a full reliance on the veracity of the great Founder of the Christian religion, and likewise—which is more than you yourselves are on all occasions willing to admit—on the accuracy and competence of the writers, who first recorded his acts and sayings. We have learned from you, whom,—and we now wish to hear from you—what we are to believe. In answer to this request we are referred to a particular fact or incident, recorded of Jesus, by his biographers, the object and purpose of which was, we are told, to produce belief of certain doctrines. And what are these? Those without the previous belief of which, no man would, or rather, according to St. Paul's declaration, could become a convert to Christianity; doctrines, which it is certain that Christ's immediate disciples believed, not less confidently, before they had acknowledged his mission, than they did afterwards. Religion and politics, they tell us, require but the application of a common sense, which every man possesses, to a subject in which every man is concerned. To be a musician, an orator, a painter, or even a good mechanic, presupposes genius; to be an excellent artisan or mechanic requires more than an average degree of talent; but to be a legislator or a



theologian, or both at once, demands nothing but common sense! Now, I willingly admit that nothing can be necessary to the salvation of a Christian which is not in his power. For such, therefore, as have neither the opportunity nor the capacity of learning more, sufficient, doubtless, will be the belief of those plain truths, and the fulfilment of those commands, which to be incapable of understanding, is to be a man in appearance only. But even to this scanty creed the disposition of faith must be added: and let it not be forgotten that though nothing can be easier than to understand a code of belief, four-fifths of which consist in avowals of disbelief, and the remainder in truths, concerning which (in this country at least) a man must have taken pains to learn to have any doubt; yet it is by no means easy to reconcile this code of negatives with the declarations of the Christian Scriptures. On the contrary, it requires all the resources of verbal criticism, and all the perverse subtlety of special pleading, to work out a plausible semblance of correspondency between them. It must, however, be conceded that a man may consistently spare himself the trouble of the attempt, and leave the New Testament unread, after he has once thoroughly persuaded himself that it can teach him nothing of any real importance that he does not already know. St. Paul indeed

thought otherwise. For though he too teaches us, that in the religion of Christ there is *milk for babes*: yet he informs us at the same time, that there is *meat for strong men*: and to the like purpose one of the Fathers has observed that in the New Testament there are shallows where the lamb may ford, and depths where the elephant must swim. The Apostle exhorts the followers of Christ to the continual study of the new religion, on the ground that in the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, and in the riches of Christ which no research could exhaust, there were contained all the treasures of knowledge and wisdom. Accordingly in that earnestness of spirit, which his own personal experience of the truth inspired, he prays with a solemn and a ceremonious fervour, that being *strengthened with might in the inner man, they may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height*, of that living principle at once the giver and the gift of that anointing faith, which in endless evolution *teaches us of all things, and is truth*. For all things are but parts and forms of its progressive manifestation, and every new knowledge but a new organ of sense and insight into this one all-inclusive verity, which, still filling the vessel of the understanding, still dilates it to a capacity of

yet other and yet greater truths, and thus makes the soul feel its poverty by the very amplitude of its present, and the immensity of its reversionary, wealth. All truth indeed is simple, and needs no extrinsic ornament. And the more profound the truth is, the more simple: for the whole labour and building-up of knowledge is but one continued process of simplification. But I cannot comprehend, in what ordinary sense of the words the properties of plainness and simplicity can be applied to the Prophets, or to the writings of St. John, or to the Epistles of St. Paul; or what can have so marvelously improved the capacity of our laity beyond the same class of persons among the primitive Christians; who, as we are told by a fellow Apostle, found in the writings last-mentioned many passages hard to be understood, which the *unlearned* as well as the unstable, were in danger of wresting and misinterpreting. I can well understand, however, what is and has been the practical consequence of this notion. It is this very consequence, indeed, that occasioned the preceding remarks, makes them pertinent to my present subject, and gives them a place in the train of argument requisite for its illustration. For what need of any after-recurrence to the sources of information concerning a religion, the whole contents of which can be thoroughly acquired at once, and in a few hours?

An occasional remembrancing may, perhaps, be expedient; but what object of study can a man propose to himself in a matter of which he knows all that can be known, all at least, that it is of use to know? Like the first rules of arithmetic, its few plain and obvious truths may hourly serve the man's purposes, yet never once occupy his thoughts. But it is impossible that the affections should be kept constant to an object which gives no employment to the understanding. The energies of the intellect, increase of insight, and enlarging views, are necessary to keep alive the substantial faith in the heart. They are the appointed fuel to the sacred fire. In the state of perfection all other faculties may, perhaps, be swallowed up in love; but it is on the wings of the Cherubim, which the ancient Hebrew doctors interpreted as meaning the powers and efforts of the intellect, that we must first be borne up to the pure empyrean: and it must be Seraphs and not the hearts of poor mortals, that can burn unfuelled and self-fed. *Give me understanding* (exclaimed the royal Psalmist) *and I shall observe thy law with my whole heart. Teach me knowledge and good judgment. Thy commandment is exceeding broad: O how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day. The entrance of thy words giveth light, it giveth understanding to the simple. I prevented the dawning*

*of the morning: mine eyes prevent the night-watches, that I might meditate upon thy word.*

Now where the very contrary of this is the opinion of many, and the practice of most, what results can be expected but those which are actually presented to us in our daily experience?

Thus, then, there is one class of men \* who read

\* Whether it be on the increase, as a sect, is doubtful. But it is admitted by all—nay, strange as it may seem, made a matter of boast,—that the number of its secret adherents, outwardly of other denominations, is tenfold greater than that of its avowed and incorporated followers. And truly in our cities and great manufacturing and commercial towns, among lawyers and such of the tradesfolk as are the ruling members in book-clubs, I am inclined to fear that this has not been asserted without good ground. For, Socinianism in its present form, consisting almost wholly in attack and imagined detection, has a particular charm for what are called shrewd knowing men. Besides, the vain and half-educated, whose Christian and surnames in the title pages of our magazines, lady's diaries, and the like, are the successors of the shame-faced Critos, Phileleutheroses, and Philaletheses in the time of our grandfathers, will be something: and now that Deism has gone out of fashion, Socinianism has swept up its refuse. As the main success of this sect is owing to the small proportion which the affirmative articles of their faith (*rari nantes in gurgite vasto*) bear to the negative, (that is their belief to their disbelief) it will be an act of kindness to the unwary to bring together the former under one point of view. This is done in the following catalogue, the greater part if not the whole of which may be authenticated from the writings of Mr. Belsham.

1. They believe in one God, professing to differ from other Christians only in holding the Deity to be unipersonal, the

the Scriptures, when they do read them, in order to pick and choose their faith: or (to speak more accurately) for the purpose of plucking away live-asunder, as it were from the divine organism of

Father alone being God, the Son a mere, though an inspired and highly gifted, man, and the Holy Spirit either a synonyme of God, or of the divine agency, or of its effects.

2. They believe men's actions necessitated, and consistently with this affirm that the Christian religion (that is, their view of it) precludes all remorse for our sins, they being a present calamity, but not guilt.

3. They believe the Gospels though not written by inspiration, to be authentic histories on the whole: though with some additions and interpolations. And on the authority of these writings confirmed by other evidence, they believe in the resurrection of the man Jesus Christ, from the dead.

4. On the historic credibility of this event they believe in the resurrection of the body, which in their opinion is the whole man, at the last day: and differ from other Churches in this only, that while other Christians believe, that all men will arise in the body, they hold that all the bodies that had been men will arise.

5. A certain indefinite number of mankind thus renewed to life and consciousness, it is the common belief of them all, will be placed in a state of happiness and immortality. But with respect to those who have died in the calamitous condition of unreformed sinfulness, (to what extent it is for the supreme Judge to decide) they are divided among themselves. The one party teach, that such unhappy persons will be raised only to be re-annihilated: the other party contend, that there will be a final restoration of all men, with a purgatory or state of remedial discipline, the severity and duration of which will be proportioned to the kind, degree, and obstinacy of the disease, and of which

the Bible, textuary morsels and fragments for the support of doctrines which they had learned beforehand from the higher oracle of their own natural common-sense. *Sanctas Scripturas frustant ut*

therefore every man is left to his own conjectural hopes and fears: with this comfort however to the very worst, (that is, most unfortunate and erroneous of mankind) that it will be all well with them at last. In this article they differ from the Papists in having no hell, and in placing their purgatory after, instead of before, the day of judgment.

6. Lastly, as they hold only an intellectual and physical, and not a moral, difference in the actions and characters of men, they not being free agents, and therefore not more responsible beings than the true beasts, although their greater powers of memory and comparison render them more susceptible of being acted on by prospective motives—(and in this sense they retain the term, responsibility, after having purified it by the ex-inanition of its old, and the transfusion of a new, meaning)—and as they with strict consequence, merge all the attributes of Deity in power, intelligence, and benevolence, (mercy and justice being modes, or rather perspective views, of the two latter; the holiness of God meaning the same or nothing at all; and his anger, offence, and hatred of moral evil, being mere metaphors and figures of speech addressed to a rude and barbarous people) they profess to hold a Redemption—not however by the Cross of Christ, except as his death was an evidence of his sincerity, and the necessary preliminary to his Resurrection; but—by the effects which this fact of his Resurrection, together with his example, and his re-publication of the moral precepts (taught indeed long before, but as they think, not so clearly, by Moses and the Prophets) were calculated to produce on the human mind. So that if it had so happened, that a man had been influenced to an innocent and useful life by the example, precepts, and

*frustrant.* Through the gracious dispensations of Providence a complexity of circumstances may co-operate as antidotes to a noxious principle, and realise the paradox of a very good man under a

martyrdom of Socrates, Socrates, and not Christ, would have been his Redeemer.

These are all the positives of the modern Socinian Creed, and even these it was not possible to extricate wholly from the points of disbelief. But if it should be asked, why this resurrection, or re-creation is confined to the human animal, the answer must be,—that more than this has not been revealed. And so far all Christians will join assent. But some have added, and in my opinion much to their credit, that they hope it may be the case with the brutes likewise, as they see no sufficient reason to the contrary. And truly, upon their scheme, I agree with them. For if man be no other or nobler creature essentially, than he is represented in their system, the meanest reptile, that maps out its path on the earth by lines of slime, must be of equal worth and respectability, not only in the sight of the Holy One, but by a strange contradiction even before man's own reason. For remove all the sources of esteem and the love founded on esteem, and whatever else pre-supposes a will and therein a possible transcendence to the material world; mankind, as far as my experience has extended, (and I am less than the least of many whom I could cite as having formed the very same judgment) are on the whole distinguished from the other beasts incomparably more to their disadvantage, by lying, treachery, ingratitude, massacre, thirst of blood, and by sensualities which both in sort and degree it would be libelling their brother-beasts to call bestial, than to their advantage by a greater extent of intellect. And what indeed, abstracted from the free-will, could this intellect be but a more showy instinct of more various application indeed, but far less secure, useful, or adapted to its purposes, than the



very evil faith. It is not denied that a Socinian may be as honest, useful and benevolent a character as any of his neighbours; and if he thinks more and derives a larger portion of his pleasures from intellectual sources, he is likely to be more so. But in such instances, (and that they are not infrequent, I am, from my own experience, most willing to bear witness,) the fruit is from the grafts, not from the tree. The native produce is, or would be, an intriguing, overbearing, scornful and worldly disposition; and in point of fact, it is the only scheme of religion that inspires in its adherents a contempt for the understandings of all who differ

instinct of birds, insects, and the like. In short, as I have elsewhere observed, compared with the wiles and factories of the spider, or with the cunning of the fox, it would be but a more efflorescent, and for that very cause a less efficient, salt to prevent the hog from putrifying before its destined hour.

Well may the words of Isaiah be applied and addressed to the teachers and followers of this sect, or rather, I would say, to their tenets as personified—*The word of the Lord was unto them, precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little, that they might go and fall backward, and be broken and snared. Wherefore, hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men that rule this people! Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement! Your covenant with death shall be annulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand. For your bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself upon it, and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it.*—xxviii.

from them.\* But be this as it may, and whatever be its effects, it is not probable that Christianity will have any direct influence on men who pay it no other compliment than that of calling by its name the previous dictates and decisions of their own mother-wit.

Still, however, the more numerous class is of those who do not trouble themselves at all with religious matters, which they resign to the clergyman of the parish. But whilst not a few among these men consent to pray and hear by proxy; and whilst others, more attentive to the prudential advantages of a decorous character, yield the customary evidence of their Church-membership; but, this performed, are at peace with themselves, and

————— think their Sunday's task  
As much as God or man can fairly ask;—

there exists amongst the most respectable laity of our cities and great towns, an active, powerful, and enlarging minority, whose industry, while it enriches their families, is at the same time a support to the revenue, and not seldom enlivens their whole neighbourhood: men whose lives are free from all

\* A Calvinist, or Moravian, for instance, would lament over a disbeliever in their peculiar tenets, as over one from whom the gift of faith had been hitherto withholden; but would readily join in attestation of his talents, learning, good morals, and all natural gifts.—1827.

disreputable infirmities, and of whose activity in the origination, patronage, and management both of charitable and of religious associations, who must not have read or heard? and which who that has, will dare deny to be most exemplary? After the custom of our forefathers, and their pure household religion, these, in so many respects estimable persons, are for the greater part in the habit of having family-prayer, and a portion of Scripture read every morning and evening. In this class, with such changes or substitutions as the peculiar tenets of the sect require, we must include the sensible, orderly and beneficent Society of the Friends. Here then, if any where, (that is, in any class of men; for the present argument is not concerned with individuals,) we may expect to find Christianity tempering commercial avidity and sprinkling its holy damps on the passion of accumulation. This, I say, we might expect to find, if an undoubting belief in the threats and promises of Revelation, and a consequent regularity of personal, domestic, and social demeanour, sufficed to constitute that Christianity, the power and privilege of which is so to renew and irradiate the whole intelligential and moral life of man, as to overcome the *spirit of the world*. If this, the appointed test, were found wanting, should we not be forced to apprehend, nay, are we not compelled to infer, that the spirit of prudential

motive, however ennobled by the magnitude and awfulness of its objects,\* and though as the termination of a lower,—it may be the commencement (and not seldom the occasion) of a higher state,

\* And in this alone, Paley, by a use of terms altogether arbitrary, places the distinction between prudence and virtue, the former being self-love in its application to the sum of pain and pleasure that is likely to result to us, as the consequence of our actions, in the present life only; while the latter is the same self-love, that together with the present consequences of our actions, takes in likewise the more important enjoyments or sufferings which, accordingly as we obey or disobey His known commands, God has promised to bestow, or threatened to inflict, on us in the life to come.\* According to this writer, it becomes the duty of a rational free agent (it would be more pertinent to say, of a sentient animal capable of forecast) to reduce his will to an habitual coincidence with his reason, on no other ground, but because he believes that God is able and determined either to gratify or to torment him. Thus, the great principle of the Gospel, that we are bound to love our neighbours as ourselves and God above all, must, if translated into a consistency with this theory of enlightened self-love, run thus: On the ground of our fear of torment and our expectation of pleasure from

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\* "And from this account of obligation it follows, that we are obliged to nothing but what we ourselves are to gain or lose something by; for nothing else can be a violent motive to us. As we should not be obliged to obey the laws or the magistrate, unless rewards or punishments, pleasure or pain, somehow or other, depended upon our obedience; so neither should we, without the same reason, be obliged to do what is right, to practise virtue, or to obey the commands of God."—Paley, *Moral and Polit. Phil* B. II. c. 2. *et passim*.

—is not, even in respect of morality itself, that abiding and continuous principle of action, which is either one with the faith spoken of by St. Paul, or its immediate offspring. It cannot be that spirit of obedience to the commands of Christ, by which the soul dwelleth in him, and he in it; and which our Saviour himself announces as a *being born again*. And this indispensable act, or influence, or impregnation, of which, as of a divine tradition, the eldest philosophy is not silent; which flashed through the darkness of the pagan mysteries; and which it was therefore a reproach to a master in Israel, that he had not already known; this is elsewhere explained, as a seed which, though

an infinitely powerful Being, we are under a prudential obligation of acting towards our neighbours as if we loved them equally with ourselves; but ultimately and in very truth to love ourselves only. And this is the work, this the system of moral and political philosophy cited as highest authority in our Senate and Courts of Judicature? And (still worse!) this is the text-book for the moral lectures at one of our Universities, justly the most celebrated for scientific ardour and manly thinking. It is not without a pang of filial sorrow that I make this acknowledgment, which nothing could have extorted from me but the strongest conviction of the mischievous and debasing tendencies of that wide-spread system, in which the works of Paley (his Sermons excepted) act not the less pernicious part, because the most decorous and plausible. The fallacious sophistry of the grounding principle in this whole system has been detected by Des Cartes, and Bishop Butler; and of late years, with great ability and originality, by Mr. Hazlitt.

of gradual development, did yet potentially contain the essential form not merely of a better, but of another life ;—amidst all the frailties and transient eclipses of mortality making, I repeat, the subjects of this regeneration not so properly better as other men, whom therefore the world could not but hate, as aliens. Its own native growth, to whatever height it had been improved by cultivation (whether through the agency of blind sympathies, or of an intelligent self-interest, the two best guides to the loftiest points to which the worldly life can ascend) the world has always been ready and willing to acknowledge and admire. *They are of the world: therefore speak they out of the heart of the world (ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου) and the world heareth them.* (1 John, iv.)

To abstain from acts of wrong and violence, to be moreover industrious, useful, and of seemly bearing, are qualities presupposed in the Gospel code, as the preliminary conditions, rather than the proper and peculiar effects, of Christianity. But they are likewise qualities so palpably indispensable to the temporal interests of mankind that, if we except the brief frenzies of revolutionary riot, there never was a time, in which the world did not profess to reverence them : nor can we state any period, in which a more than ordinary character for assiduity, regularity, and charitableness

did not secure the world's praise and favour, and were not calculated to advance the individual's own worldly interests: provided only, that his manners and professed tenets were those of some known and allowed body of men.

I ask then, what is the fact? We are—and, till its good purposes, which are many, have been all achieved, and we can become something better, long may we continue such!—a busy, enterprising, and commercial nation. The habits attached to this character must, if there exist no adequate counterpoise, inevitably lead us, under the specious names of utility, practical knowledge, and so forth, to look at all things through the *medium* of the market, and to estimate the worth of all pursuits and attainments by their marketable value. In this does the spirit of trade consist. Now would the general experience bear us out in the assertion, that amid the absence or declension of all other antagonist forces, there is found in the very circle of the trading and opulent themselves, in the increase, namely, of religious professors among them, a spring of resistance to the excess of the commercial *impetus*, from the impressive example of their unworthy feelings evidenced by their moderation in worldly pursuits? I fear, that we may anticipate the answer wherever the religious zeal of such professors does not likewise manifest itself

by the glad devotion of as large a portion of their time and industry, as the duty of providing a fair competence for themselves and their families leaves at their own disposal, to the comprehension of those inspired writings and the evolution of those pregnant truths, which are proposed for our earnest sedulous research, in order that by occupying our understandings they may more and more assimilate our affections. I fear, that the inquiring traveller would more often hear of zealous religionists who have read (and as a duty too and with all due acquiescence) the prophetic, *Wo to them that join house to house and lay field to field, that they may be alone in the land!*—and yet find no object deform the beauty of the prospect from their window or even from their castle turrets so annoyingly, as a meadow not their own, or a field under ploughing with the beam-end of the plough in the hands of its humble owner! I fear that he must too often make report of men lawful in their dealings, Scriptural in their language, almsgivers, and patrons of Sunday schools, who are yet resistless and overawing bidders at all land auctions in their neighbourhood, who live in the centre of farms without leases, and tenants without attachments! Or if his way should lie through our great towns and manufacturing districts, instances would grow cheap with him of wealthy



religious practitioners, who never travel for orders without cards of edification in prose and verse, and small tracts of admonition and instruction, all "plain and easy, and suited to the meanest capacities;" who pray daily, as the first act of the morning and as the last of the evening, *Lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil!* and employ all the interval with an edge of appetite keen as the scythe of death in the pursuit of yet more and yet more of a temptation so perilous, that (as they have full often read, and heard read, without the least questioning, or whisper of doubt) no power short of omnipotence could make their deliverance from it credible or conceivable. Of all denominations of Christians, there is not one in existence or on record whose whole scheme of faith and worship was so expressly framed for the one purpose of spiritualising the mind and of abstracting it from the vanities of the world, as the Society of Friends, not one, in which the members are connected, and their professed principles enforced by so effective and wonderful a form of discipline. But in the zeal of their founders and first proselytes for perfect spirituality they excluded from their system all ministers especially trained and educated for the ministry, with all professional theologians: and they omitted to provide for the raising up among themselves any other established

class of learned men, as teachers and schoolmasters for instance, in their stead. Even at this day, though the Quakers are in general remarkably shrewd and intelligent in all worldly concerns, yet learning, and more particularly theological learning, is more rare among them in proportion to their wealth and rank in life, and holden in less value, than among any other known sect of Christians. What has been the result? If the occasion permitted, I could dilate with pleasure on their decent manners and decorous morals, as individuals, and their exemplary and truly illustrious philanthropic efforts as a Society. From all the gay and tinsel vanities of the world their discipline has preserved them, and the English character owes to their example some part of its manly plainness in externals. But my argument is confined to the question, whether religion in its present state and under the present conceptions of its demands and purposes does, even among the most religious, exert any efficient force of control over the commercial spirit, the excess of which we have attributed not to the extent and magnitude of the commerce itself, but to the absence or imperfection of its appointed checks and counter-agents. Now as the system of the Friends in its first intention is of all others most hostile to worldly-mindedness on the one hand; and as, on the other, the adherents of this

system both in confession and practice confine Christianity to feelings and motives ; they may be selected as representatives of the strict, but unstudied and uninquiring, religionists of every denomination. Their characteristic propensities will supply, therefore, no unfair test for the degree of resistance, which our present Christianity is capable of opposing to the cupidity of a trading people. That species of Christianity I mean, which, as far as knowledge and the faculties of thought are concerned,—which, as far as the growth and grandeur of the intellectual man is in question—is to be learnt *ex tempore* ! A Christianity poured in on the *catechumen* all and all at once, as from a shower-bath : and which, whatever it may be in the heart, yet for the understanding and reason is from boyhood onward a thing past and perfected. If the almost universal opinion be tolerably correct, the question is answered. But I by no means appropriate the remark to the wealthy Quakers, or even apply it to them in any particular or eminent sense, when I say, that often as the motley reflexes of my experience move in long procession of manifold groups before me, the distinguished and world-honoured company of Christian Mammonists appears to the eye of my imagination as a drove of camels heavily laden, yet all at full speed, and each in the confident

expectation of passing through the *eye of the needle*, without stop or halt, both beast and baggage.

Not without an uneasy reluctance have I ventured to tell the truth on this subject, lest I should be charged with the indulgence of a satirical mood and an uncharitable spleen. But my conscience bears me witness, and I know myself too near the grave to trifle with its name, that I am solely actuated by a sense of the exceeding importance of the subject at the present moment. I feel it an awful duty to exercise the honest liberty of free utterance in so dear a concernment as that of preparing my country for a change in its external relations, which must come sooner or later; which I believe to have already commenced; and that it will depend on the presence or absence of a corresponding change in the mind of the nation, and above all in the aims and ruling opinions of our gentry and moneyed men, whether it is to cast down our strength and prosperity, or to fix them on a firmer and more august basis. "Surely to every good and peaceable man it must in nature needs be a hateful thing to be the displeaser and molester of thousands;\*\*\* but when God commands to take the trumpet and blow a dolorous or a jarring blast, it lies not in man's will what he shall say and what he shall conceal." \*

\* Milton. Reason of Church Government, B. II. Introd.—*Ed.*

Thus, then, of the three most approved antagonists to the spirit of barter, and the accompanying disposition to overvalue riches with all the means and tokens thereof—of the three fittest and most likely checks to this tendency, namely, the feeling of ancient birth and the respect paid to it by the community at large ; a genuine intellectual philosophy with an accredited, learned, and philosophic class ; and lastly, religion ; we have found the first declining, the second not existing, and the third efficient, indeed, in many respects and to many excellent purposes, only not in this particular direction : the religion here spoken of, having long since parted company with that inquisitive and bookish theology which tends to defraud the student of his worldly wisdom, inasmuch as it diverts his mind from the accumulation of wealth by pre-occupying his thoughts in the acquisition of knowledge. For the religion of best repute among us holds all the truths of Scripture and all the doctrines of Christianity so very transcendent, or so very easy, as to make study and research either vain or needless. It professes, therefore, to hunger and thirst after righteousness alone, and the rewards of the righteous ; and thus habitually taking for granted all truths of spiritual import leaves the understanding vacant and at leisure for a thorough insight into present and temporal

interests; which, doubtless, is the true reason why its followers are in general such shrewd, knowing, wary, well-informed, thrifty and thriving men of business. But this is likewise the reason, why it neither does nor can check or circumscribe the spirit of barter; and to the consequent monopoly which this commercial spirit possesses, must its over-balance be attributed, not the extent or magnitude of the commerce itself.

Before I enter on the result assigned by me as the chief ultimate cause of the present state of the country, and as the main ground on which the immediate occasions of the general distress have worked, I must entreat my readers to reflect that the spirit of trade has been a thing of insensible growth; that whether it be enough, or more or less than enough, is a matter of relative, rather than of positive, determination; that it depends on the degree in which it is aided or resisted by all the other tendencies that co-exist with it; and that in the best of times this spirit may be said to live on a narrow *isthmus*, between a sterile desert and a stormy sea, still threatened and encroached on either by the too much or the too little. As the argument does not depend on any precise accuracy in the dates, I shall assume it to have commenced as an influencing part of the national character, with the institution of the

public funds in the reign of William III., and from the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, to have been hurrying onward to its *maximum*, which it seems to have attained during the late war. The short interruptions may be well represented as a few steps backward, that it might leap forward with an additional *momentum*. The words, old and modern, then and now are applied by me, the former to the interval between the Reformation and the Revolution; and the latter to the whole period since the Revolution: the one from 1460 to 1680, the other from 1680 to the present time.

Having premised this explanation, I can now return an intelligible answer to a question, that will have risen in the reader's mind during his perusal of the last three or four pages. How, it will be objected, does all this apply to the present times in particular? When was the industrious part of mankind not attached to the pursuits most likely to reward their industry? Was the wish to make a fortune, or, if you prefer an invidious phrase, the lust of lucre, less natural to our forefathers than to their descendants? If you say that though a not less frequent, nor less powerful passion with them than with us, it yet met with a more frequent and more powerful check, a stronger and a more advanced boundary-line in the religion of old times, and in the faith, fashion, habits, and authority of

the religious : in what did this difference consist ; and in what way did these points of difference act ? If indeed the antidote in question once possessed virtues which it no longer possesses, or not in the same degree, what is the ingredient, either added, omitted, or diminished since that time, which can have rendered it less efficacious now than then ?

Well ! (I might reply) grant all this : and let both the profession and the professors of a spiritual principle, as a counterpoise to the worldly weights at the other end of the balance, be supposed much the same in one age as in the other. Assume for a moment, that I can establish neither the fact of its present lesser efficiency, nor any points of difference capable of accounting for it. Yet it might still be a sufficient answer to this objection, that as the commerce of the country, and with it the spirit of commerce, has increased fifty-fold since the commencement of the latter period, it is not enough that the counterweight should be as great as it was in the former period : to remain the same in its effect, it ought to have become very much greater. But though this be a consideration not less important than it is obvious, yet I do not purpose to rest in it. I affirm that a difference may be shown, and of no trifling importance as to that one point, to which my present argument is confined. For let it be remembered that it is not



to any extraordinary influences of the religious principle that I am referring, not to voluntary poverty, or sequestration from social and active life, or schemes of mortification. I speak of religion merely as I should of any worldly object, which, as far as it employs and interests a man, leaves less room in his mind for other pursuits: except that this must be more especially the case in the instance of religion, because beyond all other interests it is calculated to occupy the whole mind, and employ successively all the faculties of man; and because the objects which it presents to the imagination as well as to the intellect cannot be actually contemplated, much less can they be the subject of frequent meditation, without dimming the lustre and blunting the rays of all rival attractions. It is well known, and has been observed of old, that poetry tends to render its devotees \* careless of money and outward appearances, while philosophy inspires a contempt of both as objects of desire or admiration. But religion is the poetry and

\* *Hic error tamen et levis hæc insania quantas  
Virtutes habeat, sic collige: vatis avarus  
Non temere est animus; versus amat, hoc studet unum;  
Detrimenda, fugas servorum, incendia ridet;  
Non fraudem socio, puerove incogitat ullam  
Pupillo; vivit siliquis et pane secundo:  
Militiæ quanquam piger et malus, utilis urbi.*

HORAT. EPIST. II. I. 118.

philosophy of all mankind; unites in itself whatever is most excellent in either, and while it at one and the same time calls into action and supplies with the noblest materials both the imaginative and the intellective faculties, superadds the interests of the most substantial and home-felt reality to both, to the poetic vision and the philosophic idea. But in order to produce a similar effect it must act in a similar way; it must reign in the thoughts of a man and in the powers akin to thought, as well as exercise an admitted influence over his hopes and fears, and through these on his deliberate and individual acts.

Now as my first presumptive proof of a difference (I might almost have said, of a contrast) between the religious character of the period since the Revolution, and that of the period from the accession of Edward VI. to the abdication of James II., I refer to the sermons and to the theological works generally of the latter period. It is my full conviction that in any half dozen sermons of Donne, or Taylor, there are more thoughts, more facts and images, more excitements to inquiry and intellectual effort, than are presented to the congregations of the present day in as many churches or meetings during twice as many months. Yet both these were the most popular preachers of their times, were heard with enthusiasm by crowded and

promiscuous audiences, and the effect produced by their eloquence was holden in reverential and affectionate remembrance by many attendants on their ministry, who, like the pious Isaac Walton, were not themselves men of much learning or education. In addition to this fact, think likewise on the large and numerous editions of massy, closely printed folios: the impressions so large and the editions so numerous, that all the industry of destruction for the last hundred years has but of late sufficed to make them rare. From the long list select those works alone, which we know to have been the most current and favourite works of their day: and of these again no more than may well be supposed to have had a place in the scantiest libraries, or perhaps with the Bible and Common Prayer Book to have formed the library of their owner. Yet on the single shelf so filled we should find almost every possible question, that could interest or instruct a reader whose whole heart was in his religion, discussed with a command of intellect that seems to exhaust all the learning and logic, all the historical and moral relations, of each several subject. The very length of the discourses, with which these rich souls of wit and knowledge fixed the eyes, ears, and hearts of their crowded congregations, are a source of wonder now-a-days, and (we may add) of self-congratulation, to many a sober Christian,

who forgets with what delight he himself has listened to a two hours' harangue on a loan or tax, or at the trial of some remarkable cause or culprit. The transfer of the interest makes and explains the whole difference. For though much may be fairly charged on the Revolution in the mode of preaching as well as in the matter, since the fresh morning and fervent noon of the Reformation, when there was no need to visit the conventicles of fanaticism in order to

See God's ambassador in pulpit stand,  
Where they could take notes from his look and hand;  
And from his speaking action bear away  
More sermon than our preachers use to say;

yet this too must be referred to the same change in the habits of men's minds, a change that involves both the shepherd and the flock: though like many other effects, it tends to reproduce and strengthen its own cause.

The last point, to which I shall appeal, is the warmth and frequency of the religious controversies during the former of the two periods; the deep interest excited by them among all but the lowest and most ignorant classes; the importance attached to them by the very highest; the number, and in many instances the transcendant merit, of the controversial publications—in short, the rank and value assigned to polemic divinity. The

subjects of the controversies may or may not have been trifling; the warmth with which they were conducted, may have been disproportionate and indecorous; and we may have reason to congratulate ourselves that the age in which *we* live, is grown more indulgent and less captious. The fact is introduced not for its own sake, but as a symptom of the general state of men's feelings, and as an evidence of the direction and main channel, in which the thoughts and interests of men were then flowing. We all know that lovers are apt to take offence and wrangle with each other on occasions that perhaps are but trifles, and which assuredly would appear such to those who had never been under the influence of a similar passion. These quarrels may be no proofs of wisdom; but still in the imperfect state of our nature the entire absence of the same, and this too on far more serious provocations, would excite a strong suspicion of a comparative indifference in the feelings of the parties towards each other, who can love so coolly where they profess to love so well. I shall believe our present religious tolerancy to proceed from the abundance of our charity and good sense, when I can see proofs that we are equally cool and forbearing as litigators and political partisans. And I must again intreat my reader to recollect that the present argument is exclusively concerned with the

requisite correctives of the commercial spirit, and with religion therefore no otherwise than as a counter-charm to the sorcery of wealth : and my main position is, that neither by reasons drawn from the nature of the human mind, nor by facts of actual experience, are we justified in expecting this from a religion which does not employ and actuate the understandings of men, and combine their affections with it as a system of truth gradually and progressively manifesting itself to the intellect ; no less than as a system of motives and moral commands learnt as soon as heard, and containing nothing but what is plain and easy to the lowest capacities. Hence it is that objects, the ostensible principle of which I have felt it my duty to oppose,\* and objects, which and the measures for the attainment of which possess my good wishes and have had the humble tribute of my public advocacy and applause—I am here alluding to the British and Foreign Bible Society—may yet converge, as to the point now in question. They may, both alike, be symptoms of the same predominant disposition to that coalition-system in Christianity, for the expression of which theologians have invented or appropriated the term, Syncretism : †

\* See *supra*, p. 44.—*Ed.*

† *Clementia Evangelica* (writes a German theologian of the last century) *quasi matrona habenda est, purioris doctrinae*

although the former may be an ominous, the latter an auspicious symptom; though the one may be worse from bad, while the other is an instance of good educed from evil. Nay, I will dare confess that I know not how to think otherwise, when I hear a Bishop of the Church publicly exclaim,—(and not viewing it as a lesser inconvenience to be endured for the attainment of a far greater good, but as a thing desirable and to be preferred for its own sake)—No notes! No comment! Distribute the Bible and the Bible only among the poor!—a declaration which from any lower quarter I should have been under the temptation of attributing either to a fanatical notion of immediate illumination superseding the necessity of human

*custos, mitis quidem, at sedula tamen, at vigilans, at seductorum impatiens. Iste vero Syncretismus, quem Laodicensi apud nos tantopere collaudant, nusquam a me nisi meretrix audiet, fidei vel pigra vel status sui ignarae proles, postea autem indolis secularis genetrix, et quacum nec sincera fides, nec genuina caritas commorari feret.*

The true Gospel spirit of toleration we should regard as a matron, a kind and gentle guardian indeed of the pure doctrine, but sedulous, but vigilant, but impatient of seducers. This Syncretism on the contrary, which the Laodiceans among us join in extolling so highly, shall no where hear from me other or better name than that of harlot, the offspring of a belief either slothful or ignorant of its own condition, and then the parent of worldly-mindedness, and with whom therefore neither sincere faith nor genuine charity will endure to associate.

teaching, or to an ignorance of difficulties which (and what more worthy?) have successfully employed all the learning, sagacity, and unwearied labours of great and wise men, and eminent servants of Christ, during all the ages of Christianity, and will doubtless continue to yield new fruits of knowledge and insight to a long series of followers.\*

Though an overbalance of the commercial spirit is involved in the deficiency of its counterweights; yet the facts that exemplify the mode and extent of its operation will afford a more direct and satisfactory kind of proof. And first I am to speak of this overbalance as displayed in the commercial world itself. But as this is the first, so is it for my present purpose the least important point of view. A portion of the facts belonging to this division of the subject I have already noticed;

\* I am well aware that by these open avowals, that with much to honour and praise in many, there is something to correct in all; parties, I shall provoke many enemies and make never a friend. If I dared abstain, how gladly should I have so done! Would that the candid part of my judges would peruse or re-peruse the affecting and most eloquent introductory pages of Milton's second book of his "Reason of Church Government urged," &c., and give me the credit, which my conscience bears me witness I am entitled to claim, for all the moral feelings expressed in that exquisite passage.



and for the remainder let the following suffice as the substitute or representative. The moral of the tale I leave to the reader's own reflections. Within the last sixty years or perhaps a somewhat larger period, (for I do not pretend to any nicety of dates, and the documents are of easy access) there have occurred at intervals of about twelve or thirteen years each, certain periodical revolutions of credit. Yet revolution is not the precise word. To state the thing as it is, I ought to have said, certain gradual expansions of credit ending in sudden contractions, or, with equal propriety, ascensions to a certain utmost possible height, which has been different in each successive instance; but in every instance the attainment of this its *ne plus ultra* has been instantly announced by a rapid series of explosions (in mercantile language, a crash) and a consequent precipitation of the general system. For a short time this Icarian credit, or rather this illegitimate offspring of confidence, to which it stands in the same relation as Phaeton to his parent god in the old fable, seems to lie stunned by the fall; but soon recovering, again it strives upward, and having once more regained its mid region,

————— thence many a league,  
As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides  
Audacious;—

till at the destined zenith of its vaporous exaltation,

All unawares, fluttering its pennons vain,—  
Plump down it drops.—

Or that I may descend myself to the cool element of prose,—alarm and suspicion gradually diminish into a judicious circumspectness; but by little and little, circumspection gives way to the desire and emulous ambition of doing business: till impatience and incaution on the one side, tempting and encouraging headlong adventure, want of principle, and confederacies of false credit on the other, the movements of trade become yearly gayer and giddier, and end at length in a *vortex* of hopes and hazards, of blinding passions and blind practices, which should have been left where alone they ought ever to have been found, among the wicked lunacies of the gaming table.

I am not ignorant that the power and circumstantial prosperity of the nation has been increasing during the same period, with an accelerated force unprecedented in any country, the population of which bears the same proportion to its productive soil; and partly, perhaps, even in consequence of this system. By facilitating the means of enterprise, it must have called into activity a multitude of enterprising individuals and a variety of talent that would otherwise have lain dormant: while by the

same ready supply of excitements to labour, together with its materials and instruments, even an unsound credit has been able within a short time to \* substantiate itself. I shall perhaps be told too, that the very evils of this system, even the periodical crash itself, are to be regarded but as so much superfluous steam ejected by the escape pipes, and safety valves of a self-regulating machine: and lastly, that in a free and trading country all things find their level.

I have as little disposition as motive to recant the principles, which in many forms and through various channels I have laboured to propagate; but there is surely no inconsistency in yielding all due honour to the spirit of trade, and yet charging sundry evils which weaken or reverse its blessings on the over-balance of that spirit, taken as the paramount principle of action in the nation at

\* If by the display of forged Bank notes a speculator should establish the belief of his being a man of large fortune, and gain a temporary confidence in his own paper-money; and if by large wages so paid he should stimulate a number of indolent Highlanders to bring a tract of waste land into profitable cultivation, the promissory notes of the owner, which derived their first value from a delusion, would end in representing a real property, and this their own product. A most improbable case! In its accidental features, I reply, rather than in its essentials. How many thousand acres have been reclaimed from utter unproductiveness, how many doubled in value, by the agency of notes issued beyond the *bona fide* capital of the bank or firm that circulated them, or at best on capital afloat and insecure.

large. Much I still concede to the arguments for the present scheme of things, as adduced in the preceding paragraph; but I likewise see, and always have seen, much that needs winnowing. Thus instead of the position, that all things find, it would be less equivocal and far more descriptive of the fact to say, that things are always finding, their level: which might be taken as the paraphrase or ironical definition of a storm. But persons are not things—but man does not find his level. Neither in body nor in soul does the man find his level. After a hard and calamitous season, during which the thousand wheels of some vast manufactory had remained silent as a frozen water-fall, be it that plenty has returned and that trade has once more become brisk and stirring: go, ask the overseer, and question the parish doctor, whether the workman's health and temperance with the staid and respectful manners best taught by the inward dignity of conscious self-support, have found their level again? Alas! I have more than once seen a group of children in Dorsetshire, during the heat of the dog-days, each with its little shoulders up to its ears, and its chest pinched inward, the very habit and fixures, as it were, that had been impressed on their frames by the former ill-fed, ill-clothed, and unfuelled winters. But as with the body, so or still worse with the mind. Nor is the effect

confined to the labouring classes, whom by an ominous but too appropriate change in our phraseology we are now accustomed to call the labouring poor. I cannot persuade myself that the frequency of failures with all the disgraceful secrets of fraud and folly, of unprincipled vanity in expending and desperate speculation in retrieving, can be familiarised to the thoughts and experience of men, as matters of daily occurrence, without serious injury to the moral sense : more especially in times when bankruptcies spread, like a fever, at once contagious and epidemic ; swift too as the travel of an earthquake, that with one and the same chain of shocks opens the ruinous chasm in cities that have an ocean between them !—in times, when the fate flies swifter than the fear, and yet the report, that follows the flash, has a ruin of its own and arrives but to multiply the blow !—when princely capitals are often but the telegraphs of distant calamity : and still worse, when no man's treasure is safe who has adopted the ordinary means of safety, neither the high nor the humble ; when the lord's rents and the farmer's store, entrusted perhaps but as yesterday, are asked after at closed doors !—but worst of all, in its moral influences as well as in the cruelty of suffering, when the old labourer's savings, the precious robberies of self-denial from every day's comfort ;

when the orphan's funds; the widow's livelihood; the fond confiding sister's humble fortune; are found among the victims to the remorseless mania of dishonest speculation, or the desperate cowardice of embarrassment; to the drunken stupor of a usurious selfishness which for a few months respite dares incur a debt of guilt and infamy, for which the grave itself can plead no statute of limitation. Name to me any revolution recorded in history, that was not followed by a depravation of the national morals. The Roman character during the Triumvirate, and under Tiberius; the reign of Charles II. and Paris at the present moment,—are obvious instances. What is the main cause? The sense of insecurity. On what ground then dare we hope that with the same accompaniment, commercial revolutions should not produce the same effect, in proportion to the extent of their sphere?

But these blessings—with all the specific terms, into which this most comprehensive phrase is to be resolved? Dare we unpack the bales and cases so marked, and look at the articles, one by one? Increase of human life and increase of the means of life are, it is true, reciprocally cause and effect: and the genius of commerce and manufacture has been the cause of both to a degree that may well excite our wonder. But do the last results justify our exultation likewise? Human life, alas! is

but the malleable metal, out of which the thievish picklock, the slave's collar, and the assassin's *stiletto* are formed as well as the clearing axe, the feeding plough-share, the defensive sword, and the mechanic tool. But the subject is a painful one: and fortunately the labours of others, with the communications of medical men concerning the state of the manufacturing poor, have rendered it unnecessary. I will rather (though in strict method it should, perhaps, be reserved for the following head) relate a speech made to me near Fort Augustus, as I was travelling on foot through the Highlands of Scotland. The speaker was an elderly and respectable widow, who expressed herself with that simple eloquence, which strong feeling seldom fails to call forth in humble life, but especially in women. She spoke English, as indeed most Highlanders do who speak it at all, with a propriety of phrase and a discrimination of tone and emphasis that more than compensated for the scantiness of her vocabulary. After an affecting account of her own wrongs and ejection, (which however, she said, bore with comparative lightness on her, who had saved up a wherewithal to live, and was blessed with a son well to do in the world,) she made a movement with her hand in a circle, directing my eye meanwhile to various objects as marking its outline: and then observed, with a deep sigh and

a suppressed and slow voice which she suddenly raised and quickened after the first drop or cadence:—"Within this space—how short a time back! there lived a hundred and seventy-three persons: and now there is only a shepherd, and an underling or two. Yes, Sir! One hundred and seventy-three Christian souls, man, woman, boy, girl, and babe; and in almost every home an old man by the fire-side, who would tell you of the troubles before our roads were made; and many a brave youth among them who loved the birth-place of his forefathers, yet would swing about his broad sword and want but a word to march off to the battles over sea: aye, Sir, and many a good lass, who had a respect for herself! Well! but they are gone, and with them the bristled bear,\* and the pink haver,† and the potato plot that looked as gay as any flower-garden with its blossoms! I sometimes fancy that the very birds are gone, all but the crows and the gleads! Well, and what then? Instead of us all, there is one shepherd man, and it may be a pair of small lads—and a many, many sheep! And do you think, Sir! that God allows of such proceedings?"

Some days before this conversation, and while I was on the shores of Loch Katrine,‡ I had heard

\* A species of barley.

† A species of oats.

‡ The Lake so widely celebrated since then by a poet, to



of a sad counterpart to the widow's tale, and told with a far fiercer indignation, of a "Laird who had raised a company from the country round about, for the love that was borne to his name, and who gained high preferment in consequence: and that it was but a small part of those that he took away whom he brought back again. And what were the thanks which the folks had both for those that came back with him, some blind, and more in danger of blindness; and for those that had perished in the hospitals, and for those that fell in battle, fighting before or beside him? Why, that their fathers were all turned out of their farms before the year was over, and sent to wander like so many gipsies, unless they would consent to shed their grey hairs, at ten-pence a day, over the new canals. Had there been a price set upon his head, and his enemies had been coming upon him, he needed but have whistled, and a hundred brave lads would have made a wall of flame round about him with the flash of their broad-swords! Now if the French should come among us, as (it is said)

whose writings a larger number of persons have owed a larger portion of innocent, refined, and heart-bettering amusement, than perhaps to any favourite of the Muses recorded in English literature: while the most learned of his readers must feel grateful for the mass of interesting and highly instructive information scattered throughout his works, in which respect Southey is his only rival.

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they will, let him whistle to his sheep and see if they will fight for him!" The frequency with which I heard, during my solitary walk from the end of Loch-Lomond to Inverness, confident expectations of the kind expressed in his concluding words—nay, far too often eager hopes mingled with vindictive resolves—I spoke of with complaint and regret to an elderly man, whom by his dress and way of speaking I took to be a schoolmaster. Long shall I recollect his reply: "O, Sir, it kills a man's love for his country, the hardships of life coming by change and with injustice!" I was sometime afterwards told by a very sensible person who had studied the mysteries of political economy, and was therefore entitled to be listened to, "that more food was produced in consequence of this revolution, that the mutton must be eaten somewhere, and what difference where? If three were fed at Manchester instead of two at Glencoe or the Trosachs, the balance of human enjoyment was in favour of the former." I have passed through many a manufacturing town since then, and have watched many a group of old and young, male and female, going to, or returning from, many a factory, but I could never yet persuade myself to be of his opinion. Men, I still think, ought to be weighed, not counted. Their worth ought to be the final estimate of their value.

Among the occasions and minor causes of this change in the views and measures of our land-owners, and as being itself a consequent on that system of credit, the outline of which was given in a preceding page, the universal practice of enhancing the sale price of every article on the presumption of bad debts, is not the least noticeable. Nor, if we reflect that this additional per centage is repeated at each intermediate stage of its elaboration and distribution from the grower or importer to the last retailer inclusively, will it appear the least operative. Necessary, and therefore justifiable, as this plan of reprisal by anticipation may be in the case of each individual dealer, yet taken collectively and without reference to persons, the plan itself would, I suspect, startle an unfamilia-  
rised conscience, as a sort of non-descript piracy, not promiscuous in its exactions only because by a curious anomaly it grants a free pass to the offending party. Or if the law maxim, *volentibus non fit injuria*, is applicable in this case, it may perhaps be described more courteously as a Benefit Society of all the careful and honest men in the kingdom to pay the debts of the dishonest or improvident. It is mentioned here, however, as one of the appendages to the twin paramount causes, the paper currency and the national debt, and for the sake of the conjoint results. Would we learn

what these results are ;—what they have been in the higher, and what in the most numerous, class of society ? Alas ! that some of the intermediate rounds in the social ladder have been broken and not replaced, is itself one of these results. Retrace the progress of things from 1792 to 1813, when the tide was at its height, and then as far as its rapidity will permit, the ebb from its first turn to the dead low-water mark of the last quarter. Then see whether the remainder may not be generalised under the following heads. Fluctuation in the wages of labour, alternate privation and excess (not in all at the same time, but successively in each) consequent improvidence, and over all discontent and a system of factious confederacy : these form the history of the mechanics and lower ranks of our cities and towns. In the country a peasantry sinking into pauperism, step for step with the rise of the farmer's profits and indulgencies. On the side of the landlord and his compeers, we shall find the presence of the same causes attested by answerable effects. Great as their almost magical effects\*

\* During the composition of this sheet I have had and availed myself of the opportunity of perusing the Report of the Board of Agriculture for the year 1816. The numerous reflections, which this most extraordinary volume excited in my mind, I cannot even touch on in this closing sheet of a Work that has already extended far beyond my original purpose. But had I perused it at the commencement, I

were on the increase of prices in the necessities of life, they were still greater, disproportionally greater, in all articles of show and luxury. With few exceptions, it soon became difficult, and at length impracticable, for the gentry of the land, for the possessors of fixed property to retain the rank of their ancestors, or their own former establishments, without joining in the general competition under the influence of the same trading spirit. Their dependents were of course either selected from or driven into the same eddy ; while the temptation of obtaining more than the legal interest for their principal became more and more strong with all persons who, neither trading nor farming, had lived on the interest of their fortunes. It was in this latter class that the rash, and too frequently, the unprincipled projector found his readiest dupes. Had we but the secret history of the building speculations only in the vicinity of the metropolis, too many of its pages would supply an afflicting but instructive comment. That both here, and in all

should still have felt it my duty to direct the main force of my animadversions against the demagogue class of State-empirics. I was not, indeed, ignorant of the aid, which they derived from other quarters : nor am I now ashamed of not having anticipated its extent. There is, however, one communication (p. 208 to 227) from Mr. Moseley, from which, with the abatement only of the passage on tithes, I cannot withhold my entire admiration. It almost redeems the remainder of the Report.

other departments, this increased *momentum* in the spirit of trade has been followed by results of the most desirable nature, I have myself,\* exerted my best powers to evince, at a period when to present the fairest and most animating features of the system, and to prove their vast and charm-like influence on the power and resources of the nation appeared a duty of patriotism. Nothing, however, was advanced incompatible with the position, which even then I did not conceal, and which from the same sense of duty I am now attempting to display ; namely, that the extension of the commercial spirit into our agricultural system, added to the over-balance of the same spirit, even within its own sphere ; aggravated by the operation of our revenue laws ; and finally reflected in the habits, and tendencies of the labouring classes ; is the groundwork of our calamity, and the main predisposing cause, without which the late occasions would some of them not have existed, and the remainder not have produced the present distresses.

\* In a variety of articles published at different periods in the *Morning Post and Courier* ; but with most success in the *Essay*, before cited, on *Vulgar Errors on Taxation*, which had the advantage of being transferred almost entire to the columns of a daily paper, of the largest circulation, and from thence, in larger or smaller extracts, to several of our provincial journals. It was likewise reprinted in two of the *American Federalist* papers : and a translation appeared, I have been told, in the *Hamburgh Correspondenten*.

That agriculture requires principles essentially different from those of trade; that a gentleman ought not to regard his estate as a merchant his cargo, or, a shopkeeper his stock,—admits of an easy proof from the different tenure of landed property,\* and from the purposes of agriculture

\* The very idea of individual or private property in our present acceptation of the term, and according to the current notion of the right to it, was originally confined to moveable things: and the more moveable the more susceptible of the nature of property. Proceeding from the more to the less perfect right; we may bring all the objects of an independent ownership under five heads: namely, 1. precious stones, and other jewels of as easy transfer:—2. precious metals, and foreign coin taken as weight of metal:—3. merchandise, by virtue of the contract between the importer and the sovereign in whose person the unity and integrity of the common wealth were represented; that is, after the settled price had been paid by the former for the permission to import, and received by the latter under the further obligation of protecting the same:—4. the coin of the country in the possession of the natural subject; and last of all, and in certain cases, the live stock, the *peculium a pecude*. Hence, the minds of men were most familiar with the term in the case of Jews and aliens: till gradually, the privileges attached to the vicinity of the bishops and mitred abbots prepared an asylum for the fugitive vassal and the oppressed franklin, and thus laid the first foundations of a fourth class of freemen, that of citizens and burghers. To the feudal system we owe the forms, to the Church the substance of our liberty. As comment take, first, the origin of towns and cities; next, the holy war waged against slavery and villenage, and with such success that the law had barely to sanction *opus jam consummatum* at the Restoration.

itself, which ultimately are the same as those of the State of which it is the offspring. For I do not include in the name of agriculture the cultivation of a few vegetables by the women of the less savage hunter tribes. If the continuance and independence of the State be its object, the final causes of the State must be its final causes. Let us suppose the negative ends of a State already attained, namely, its own safety by means of its own strength, and the protection of person and property for all its members. There will then remain its positive ends : —1. to make the means of subsistence more easy to each individual :—2. to secure to each of its members the hope\* of bettering his own condition or that of his children :—3. the development of those faculties which are essential to his humanity, that is, to his rational and moral being. Under the last head I do not mean those degrees of intellectual cultivation which distinguish man from man in the

\* The civilised man gives up those stimulants of hope and fear, the mixture or alternation of which constitutes the chief charm of the savage life: and yet his Maker has distinguished him from the brute that perishes, by making hope an instinct of his nature and an indispensable condition of his moral and intellectual progression. But a natural instinct constitutes a natural right, as far as its gratification is compatible with the equal rights of others. Hence our ancestors classed those who were incapable of altering their condition from that of their parents, as bondsmen or villeins, however advantageously they might otherwise be situated.



same civilised society, but those only that raise the civilised man above the barbarian, the savage, and the brute. I require, however, on the part of the State, in behalf of all its members, not only the outward means of knowing their essential duties and dignities as men and free men, but likewise, and more especially, the discouragement of all such tenures and relations as must in the very nature of things render this knowledge inert, and cause the good seed to perish as it falls. Such at least is the appointed aim of a State: and at whatever distance from the ideal mark the existing circumstances of a nation may unhappily place the actual statesman, still every movement ought to be in this direction. But the negative merit of not forwarding—the exemption from the crime of necessitating—the debasement and virtual disfranchisement of any class of the community, may be demanded of every State under all circumstances: and the Government that pleads difficulties in repulse or demur of this claim impeaches its own wisdom and fortitude. But as the specific ends of agriculture are the maintenance, strength, and security, of the State, so (I repeat) must its ultimate ends be the same as those of the State: even as the ultimate end of the spring and wheels of a watch must be the same as that of the watch. Yet least of all things must we overlook or conceal,

that morally and with respect to the character and conscience of the individuals, the blame of unfaithful stewardship is aggravated, in proportion as the difficulties are less, and the consequences, lying within a narrower field of vision, are more evident and affecting. An injurious system, the connivance at which we scarcely dare more than regret in the Cabinet or Senate of an Empire, may justify an earnest reprobation in the management of private estates: provided always, that the system only be denounced, and the pleadings confined to the court of conscience. For from this court only can the redress be awarded. All reform or innovation, not won from the free agent by the presentation of juster views and nobler interests, and which does not leave the merit of having effected it sacred to the individual proprietor, it were folly to propose, and worse than folly to attempt. Madmen only would dream of digging or blowing up the foundation of a house in order to employ the materials in repairing the walls. Nothing more can be asked of the State, no other duty is imposed on it, than to withhold or retract all extrinsic and artificial aids to an injurious system; or at the utmost to invalidate in extreme cases such claims as have arisen indirectly from the letter or unforeseen operations of particular statutes: claims that instead of being contained in the rights of its

proprietary trustees are encroachments on its own rights, and a destructive trespass on a part of its own inalienable and untransferable property—I mean the health, strength, honesty, and filial love, of its children.

It would border on an affront to the understandings of the members of our Landed Interest, were I to explain in detail what the plan and conduct of a gentleman would be;\* if, as the result of his own free conviction the marketable produce of his estates were made a subordinate consideration to the living and moral growth that is to remain on the land—I mean a healthful, callous-handed but high-and-warm-hearted tenantry, twice the number of the present landless, parish-paid labourers, and ready to march off at the first call of their country with a Son of the House at their head, because under no apprehension of being (forgive the lowness of the expression) marched off at the whisper of a land-taster:—if the admitted rule, the

\* Or, (to put the question more justly as well as more candidly) of the land-owners collectively:—for who is not aware of the facilities that accompany a conformity with the general practice, or of the numerous hinderances that retard, and the final imperfection that commonly awaits, a deviation from it? On the distinction between things and persons all law human and divine is grounded. It consists in this: that the former may be used as mere means; but the latter must not be employed as the means to an end without directly or indirectly sharing in that end.

paramount self-commandment, were comprised in the fixed resolve—I will improve my estate to the utmost; and my rent-roll I will raise as much as, but no more than, is compatible with the three great ends (before enumerated) which being those of my country must be mine inclusively:—this, I repeat, it would be more than superfluous to particularise. It is a problem, the solution of which may be safely entrusted to the common sense of every one who has the hardihood to ask himself the question. But how encouraging even the approximations to such a system, of what fair promise the few fragmentary samples are, may be seen in the Report of the Board of Agriculture for 1816, p. 11, from the Earl of Winchelsea's communication, in every paragraph of which wisdom seems to address us in behalf of goodness.

But the plan of my argument requires the reverse of this picture. I am to ask what the results would be, on the supposition that agriculture is carried on in the spirit of trade; and if the necessary answer coincide with the known general practice, to show the connexion of the consequences with the present state of distress and uneasiness. In trade, from its most innocent form to the abomination of the African commerce nominally abolished after a hard-fought battle of twenty years, no distinction is or can be acknowledged between

things and persons. If the latter are part of the concern, they come under the denomination of the former. Two objects only can be proposed in the management of an estate considered as stock in trade—first, that the returns shall be the largest, quickest, and securest possible ; and secondly, with the least out-goings in the providing, over-looking and collecting the same,—whether it be expenditure of money paid for other men's time and attention, or of the tradesman's own, which are to him money's worth, makes no difference in the argument. Am I disposing of a bale of goods? The man whom I most love and esteem must yield to the stranger that outbids him ; or if it be sold on credit, the highest price, with equal security, must have the preference. I may fill up the deficiency of my friend's offer by a private gift, or loan ; but as a tradesman, I am bound to regard honesty and established character themselves, as things, as securities, for which the known unprincipled dealer may offer an unexceptionable substitute. Add to this, that the security being equal, I shall prefer, even at a considerable abatement of price, the man who will take a thousand chests or bales at once, to twenty who can pledge themselves only for fifty each. For I do not seek trouble for its own sake ; but among other advantages I seek wealth for the sake of freeing myself more and more from the

necessity of taking trouble in order to attain it. The personal worth of those, whom I benefit in the course of the process, or whether the persons are really benefited or no, is no concern of mine. The market and the shop are open to all. To introduce any other principle in trade, but that of obtaining the highest price with adequate security for articles fairly described, would be tantamount to the position that trade ought not to exist. If this be admitted, then what as a tradesman I cannot do, it cannot be my duty, as a tradesman to attempt: and the only remaining question in reason or morality is—what are the proper objects of trade. If my estate be such, my plan must be to make the most of it, as I would of any other mode of capital. As my rents will ultimately depend on the quantity and value of the produce raised and brought into the best market from my land, I will entrust the latter to those who bidding the most have the largest capital to employ on it: and this I cannot effect but by dividing it into the fewest tenures, as none but extensive farms will be an object to men of extensive capital and enterprising minds. I must prefer this system likewise for my own ease and security. The farmer is of course actuated by the same motives as the landlord: and, provided they are both faithful to their engagements, the object of both will be: 1. the utmost produce that

can be raised without injuring the estate ; 2. with the least possible consumption of the produce on the estate itself ; 3. at the lowest wages ; and 4. with the substitution of machinery for human labour wherever the former will cost less and do the same work. What are the modest remedies proposed by the majority of correspondents in the last Report of the Board of Agriculture ? “ Let measures be taken that rents, taxes, and wages be lowered, and the markets raised ! A great calamity has befallen us from importation, the lessened purchases of Government, and, ‘ the evil of a superabundant harvest ’ of which we deem ourselves the more entitled to complain, because ‘ we had been long making 112 shillings per quarter of our corn,’ and of all other articles in proportion. As the best remedies for this calamity, we propose that we should pay less to our landlords, less to our labourers, nothing to our clergyman, and either nothing or very little to the maintenance of the Government and of the poor ; but that we should sell at our former prices to the consumer ! ” — In almost every page we find deprecations of the Poor Laws : and I hold it impossible to exaggerate their pernicious tendency and consequences as at present generally worked. But let it not be forgotten, that in agricultural districts three-fourths of the Poores’ Rates are paid to healthy, robust, and

(O sorrow and shame!) industrious, hard-working paupers in lieu of wages—for men cannot at once work and starve); and therefore if there are twenty housekeepers in the parish, who are not holders of land, their contributions are so much bounty money to the latter. But the Poor Laws form a subject, which I should not undertake without trembling, had I the space of a whole volume to allot to it. Suffice it to say that this enormous mischief is undeniably the offspring of the commercial system. In the only plausible work, that I have seen, in favour of our Poor Laws on the present plan, the defence is grounded; first, on the expediency of having labour cheap, and estates let out in the fewest possible portions—in other words, of large farms and low wages—each as indispensable to the other, and both conjointly as the only means of drawing capital to the land. Again, by means of large capitals alone is the largest surplus attainable for the State; that is, for the market, or in order that the smallest possible proportion\* of the largest possible produce may be consumed by the raisers and their families:—secondly, on the impossibility of supplying, as we have supplied, all the countries of the civilised world (India perhaps and China excepted), and of underselling them even in their

\* See the Friend, pp. 392, 393.



own market if our working manufacturers were not secured by the State against the worst consequences of those failures, stagnations, and transfers, to which the different branches of trade are exposed, in a greater or less degree, beyond all human prevention ; or if the master manufacturers were compelled to give previous security for the maintenance of those whom they had, by the known law of human increase, virtually called into existence.

Let me not be misunderstood. I do not myself admit this impossibility. I have already denied, and I now repeat the denial, that these are necessary consequences of our extended commerce. On the contrary, I feel assured that the spirit of commerce is itself capable of being at once counteracted and enlightened by the spirit of the State, to the advantage of both. But I do assert, that they are necessary consequences of the commercial spirit un-counteracted and un-enlightened, wherever trade has been carried to so vast an extent as it has been in England. I assert too, that, historically and as matter of fact, they have been the consequence of our commercial system. The laws of Lycurgus, like those of the inspired Hebrew Legislator, were anti-commercial: those of Numa and Solon were at least uncommercial. Now I ask myself, what the impression would have been on the Senate of the

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Roman or the Athenian Republic, if the following proposal had been made to them and introduced by the following preamble. "Conscript Fathers, (or Senators of Athens!) it is well known to you, that circumstances being the same and the time allowed proportional, the human animal may be made to multiply as easily, and at as small an expence, as your sheep or swine: which is meant, perhaps, in the fiction of our philosophers, that souls are out of all proportion more numerous than the bodies, in which they can subsist and be manifested. It is likewise known to you, Fathers! that though in various States various checks have been ordained to prevent this increase of births from becoming such as should frustrate or greatly endanger the ends for which freemen are born; yet the most efficient limit must be sought for in the moral and intellectual prerogatives of men, in their foresight, in their habituation to the comforts and decencies of society, in the pride of independence; but above all in the hope that enables men to withstand the tyranny of the present impulse, and in their expectation of honour or discredit from the rank, character, and condition of their children. Now there are proposed to us the speedy means of at once increasing the number of the rich, the wealth of those that are already such, and the revenues of

the State: and the latter, Fathers! to so vast an amount, that we shall be able to pay not only our own soldiers but those of the monarchs whom we may thus induce to become our allies. But for this it will be requisite and indispensable that all men of enterprise and sufficiency among us should be permitted, without restraint, to encourage, and virtually to occasion, the birth of many myriads of free citizens, who from their childhood are to be amassed in clusters and employed as parts of a mighty system of machinery. While all things prove answerable to the schemes and wishes of these enterprisers, the citizens thus raised and thus employed by them will find an ample maintenance, except in those instances where the individual may have rendered himself useless by the effects of his own vices. It must not, however, be disguised from you, that the nature of the employments and the circumstances to which these citizens will be exposed, will often greatly tend to render them intemperate, diseased, and restless. Nor has it been yet made a part of the proposal, that the employers should be under any bond to counteract such injurious circumstances by education, discipline, or other efficient regulations. Still less may it be withholden from your knowledge, O Fathers of the State, that should events hereafter prove hostile

to all or to any branch of these speculations, to many or to any one of the number that shall have devoted their wealth to the realisation of the same—and the light, in which alone they can thrive, is confessedly subject to partial and even to total eclipses, which there are no means of precisely foretelling—the guardian planets to whose conjunction their success is fatally linked, will at uncertain periods, for a longer or shorter time, act in malignant oppositions—then, Fathers, the principals are to shift for themselves, and leave the disposal of the calamitous, and therefore too probably turbulent, multitude, now unemployed and useless, to the mercy of the community, and the solicitude of the State; or else to famine, violence, and the vengeance of the laws!”

If, on the maxims of ancient prudence, on the one hand not enlightened, on the other not dazzled, by the principles of trade, the immediate answer would have been:—“We should deem it danger and detriment, were we to permit so indefinite and improvident increase even of our slaves and Helots: in the case of free citizens, our countrymen, who are to swear to the same laws, and worship at the same altars, it were profanation! May the Gods avert the omen!”—if this, I say, would have been their answer, it may be safely concluded that the

connivance at the same scheme, much more that the direct encouragement of it, must be attributed to that spirit which the ancients did not recognise, namely, the spirit of commerce.

But I have shown that the same system has gradually taken possession of our agriculture. What have been the results? For him who is either unable or unwilling to deduce the whole truth from the portion of it revealed in the following extract from Lord Winchelsea's Report, whatever I could have added would have been equally in vain. His Lordship speaking of the causes which oppose all attempts to better the labourers' condition, mentions, as one great cause, the dislike which the farmers in general have to seeing the labourers rent any land. Perhaps, (he continues) "one of the reasons for their disliking this is, that the land, if not occupied by the labourers, would fall to their own share; and another I am afraid is, that they rather wish to have the labourers more dependent upon them; for which reasons they are always desirous of hiring the house and land occupied by a labourer, under pretence, that by those means the landlord will be secure of his rent, and that they will keep the house in repair. This the agents of estates are too apt to give into, as they find it much less trouble to meet six than sixty tenants at a rent-day, and by

these means avoid the being sometimes obliged to hear the wants and complaints of the poor. All parties therefore join in persuading the landlord, who it is natural to suppose (unless he has time and inclination to investigate the matter very closely) will agree to this their plan, from the manner in which it comes recommended to him : and it is in this manner that the labourers have been dispossessed of their cow-pastures in various parts of the midland counties. The moment the farmer obtains his wish, he takes every particle of the land to himself, and re-lets the house to the labourer, who by these means is rendered miserable ; the poor rate increased ; the value of the estate to the landowner diminished ; and the house suffered to go to decay ; which once fallen the tenant will never rebuild, but the landlord must, at a considerable expence. Whoever travels through the midland counties, and will take the trouble of inquiring, will generally receive for answer, that formerly there were a great many cottagers who kept cows, but that the land is now thrown to the farmers ; and if he inquires, still farther, he will find that in those parishes the poor rates have increased in an amazing degree, more than according to the average rise throughout England.”—In confirmation of his Lordship’s statement I find in the agricultural

Reports, that the county, in which I read of nothing but farms of 1000, 1500, 2000, and 2500 acres, is likewise that in which the poor rates are most numerous, the distresses of the poor most grievous, and the prevalence of revolutionary principles the most alarming. But if we consider the subject on the largest scale and nationally, the consequences are, that the most important rounds in the social ladder are broken, and the hope which above all other things distinguishes the free man from the slave, is extinguished. The peasantry therefore are eager to have their children add as early as possible to their wretched pittance, by letting them out to manufactories; while the youths take every opportunity of escaping to towns and cities. And if I were questioned, as to my opinion, respecting the ultimate cause of our liability to distresses like the present, the cause of what has been called a vicious (that is excessive) population with all the furies that follow in its train—in short, of a state of things so remote from the simplicity of nature, that we have almost deprived Heaven itself of the power of blessing us; a state in which without absurdity, a superabundant harvest can be complained of as an evil, and the recurrence of the same a ruinous calamity,—I should not hesitate to answer—"the vast and disproportionate number

of men who are to be fed from the produce of the fields, on which they do not labour."

What then is the remedy ;—who are the physicians? The reply may be anticipated. An evil which has come on gradually, and in the growth of which all men have more or less conspired, cannot be removed otherwise than gradually, and by the joint efforts of all. If we are a Christian nation, we must learn to act nationally as well as individually, as Christians. We must remove half truths, the most dangerous of errors, (as those of the poor visionaries called Spenceans,) by the whole truth. The Government is employed already in retrenchments ; but he who expects immediate relief from these, or who does not even know that if they do any thing at all, they must for the time tend to aggravate the distress, cannot have studied the operation of public expenditure.

I am persuaded that more good would be done, not only ultimate and permanent, but immediate, good, by the abolition of the lotteries accompanied by a public and Parliamentary declaration of the moral and religious grounds that had determined the Legislature to this act ; of their humble confidence of the blessing of God on the measure ; and of their hopes that this sacrifice to principle, as being more exemplary from the present pressure on



the revenue of the State, would be the more effective in restoring confidence between man and man;—I am deeply convinced, that more sterling and visible benefits would be derived from this one solemn proof and pledge of moral fortitude and national faith, than from retrenchments to a tenfold greater amount. Still more, if our legislators should pledge themselves at the same time that they would hereafter take counsel for the gradual removal or counteraction of all similar encouragements and temptations to vice and folly, that had, alas! been tolerated hitherto, as the easiest way of supplying the exchequer. And truly, the financial motives would be strong indeed, if the revenue laws in question were but half as productive of money to the state as they are of guilt and wretchedness to the people.

Our manufacturers must consent to regulations; our gentry must concern themselves in the education as well as in the instruction of their natural clients and dependents, must regard their estates as secured indeed from all human interference by every principle of law, and policy; but yet as offices of trust, with duties to be performed, in the sight of God and their country. Let us become a better people, and the reform of all the public (real or supposed) grievances, which we use as pegs whereon

to hang our own errors and defects, will follow of itself. In short, let every man measure his efforts by his power and his sphere of action, and do all he can do. Let him contribute money where he cannot act personally: but let him act personally and in detail wherever it is practicable. Let us palliate where we cannot cure, comfort where we cannot relieve: and for the rest rely upon the promise of the King of Kings by the mouth of his Prophet, *Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters.*

THE END.

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